

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WOLLASTON

BY-LAW NO.: 45 - 2021

BEING A BY-LAW TO ADOPT AN  
INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

WHEREAS Section 2 the Municipal Act 2001, S.O. 2001, Chapter 25, as amended, provides that municipalities are created to be responsible and accountable governments with respect to matters within their jurisdiction and each municipality is given powers and duties under this Act and many other Acts for the purpose of providing good government with respect to those matters;

AND WHEREAS Section 11(2) provides that a lower-tier municipality may pass by-laws respecting governance structure of the municipality, accountability and transparency of the municipality and its operations, financial management of the municipality, public assets of the municipality acquired for the purpose of exercising its authority under this or any other Act, economic, social and environmental well-being of the municipality, health, safety and well-being of persons, services and things that the municipality is authorized to provide and protection of persons and property, including consumer protection;

AND WHEREAS the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) provides that every provider of goods and services shall establish and maintain accessibility policies, practices and procedures related to the following:

Customer Service  
Employment Standards  
Information and Communication Standards  
Transportation Standards  
Built Environment

AND WHEREAS 0. Reg. 191/11 made under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 establishes accessibility standards for public sector organizations in the areas of Information and Communication, Employment and Transportation to facilitate the removal and prevention of barriers to people with disabilities to enable better access to municipal goods, services, and facilities;

AND WHEREAS Council has deemed it appropriate to establish an Integrated Accessibility Policy and guiding principles;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Wollaston hereby adopts an Accessible Service Policy in accordance with Schedule "A" attached hereto;

PASSED this 14<sup>th</sup> day of June 2021.

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**MAYOR: LYNN KRUGER**

**SEAL**

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**CLERK: BERNICE CROCKER**

**SCHEDULE “A” to By-Law 45-2021  
TOWNSHIP OF WOLLASTON**

**ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY  
Providing Goods and Services  
To People with Disabilities**

**PURPOSE**

The Corporation of the Township of Wollaston is committed to providing quality goods and services that are accessible to all persons that we serve and in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of Persons with Disabilities.

This policy is drafted in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 191/11), the Ontario Human Rights Code.

**POLICY**

The Township of Wollaston is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code respecting non-discrimination.

The Township of Wollaston understands that obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and its accessibility standards do not substitute or limit its obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code or obligations to Persons with Disabilities under any other law.

The Township of Wollaston is committed to complying with both the Ontario Human Rights Code and the AODA.

The Township of Wollaston is committed to excellence in serving all customers including Persons with Disabilities.

Our accessible customer service policies are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equality of opportunity for Persons with Disabilities.

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 third parties.

This policy addresses the following:

- The provision of goods and services to Persons with Disabilities,
- Communication with a Person with a Disability,
- The use of assistive devices by Persons with Disabilities,
- The use of service animals by Persons with Disabilities,
- The use of support persons by Persons with Disabilities,
- Notice of temporary disruptions in service and facilities,
- Training,
- Customer feedback regarding the provision of goods and services to Persons with Disabilities, and
- Notice of availability and format of documents.

## **SCOPE**

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

## **APPLICATION**

### **1.0 Providing Goods, Services, or Facilities to Persons with Disabilities**

The Township of Wollaston is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code respecting non-discrimination.

The Township of Wollaston understands that obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and its accessibility standards do not substitute or limit its obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code or obligations to Persons with Disabilities under any other law.

The Township of Wollaston is committed to complying with both the Ontario Human Rights Code and the AODA.

The Township of Wollaston is committed to excellence in serving all customers including Persons with Disabilities.

Our accessible customer service policies are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equality of opportunity for Persons with Disabilities.

## **2.0 Assistive Devices**

Persons with Disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our goods, services, or facilities.

In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used to ensure the Person with a Disability can access our goods, services, or facilities.

We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices we have on site or that we provide that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods, services, or facilities.

It is the responsibility of the Person with a Disability to ensure that their assistive device is operated in a controlled and safe manner at all times.

### **3.0 Communication**

Communications from the Township of Wollaston to a Person with a Disability will be provided in a timely manner which takes into account an individual's disability by consulting with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the accessible format and communication support and addresses such forms as print material, social media posts, Council documents, video content, and the municipal website. The cost will be no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

#### **3.1 Communicating with the Public**

Staff members who communicate with customers will be trained on how to interact and communicate with people who have various types of disabilities. This includes how to communicate with persons over the telephone in clear and plain language, to speak clearly, and to tailor their responses as much as possible in support of the individual.

#### **3.2 The Township's Website**

It shall be the policy of the Township of Wollaston to ensure that its website meets the World Wide Web Consortium Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 Level AA.

The Township will, upon request, provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for Persons with Disabilities. Staff will consult with the requester on the most appropriate format and will make every effort to provide such information in a timely manner.

#### **3.3 Council Documents and Public Information**

The Township of Wollaston will ensure that all Persons with Disabilities are able to access all important documents and public information, including Council documents and others necessary to engage in public participation. Any questions customers may have about the content of a document will be answered in person, by telephone, or e-mail.

### **3.4 Correspondence, Invoices, and Other Documentation**

The Township is committed to providing accessible information to the public. For this reason, upon request, correspondence, invoices, and other documentation will be provided in large print or by e-mail.

Staff may provide a document, or information contained in a document, in a format that takes into account the person's disability. Staff and the Person with a Disability may agree upon the format to be used for the document or information.

Any questions customers may have about the content of a document will be answered in person, by telephone, or e-mail.

### **4.0 Service Animals**

We are committed to welcoming Persons with Disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties.

If a guide dog or other service animal accompanies a visiting Person with a Disability, the Township shall ensure that the person is permitted to enter the premises with the animal and keep the animal with them.

#### **4.1 Exceptions to the Rule**

Service animals will not be permitted:

- Where food preparation is being undertaken, and/or
- As otherwise disallowed by law.

If a service animal is excluded by law, the Township will ensure that alternate means are available to enable the Person with a Disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Township's goods and services. We will do the following to ensure Persons with Disabilities can access our goods, services, or facilities by:

- Explaining why the animal is excluded, and/or
- Discussing with the customer another way of providing goods, services, or facilities.

## **4.2 Recognizing a Service Animal**

When we cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, our staff may ask a person to provide documentation (template, letter, or form) from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

A service animal can be easily identified through visual indicators, such as when it wears a harness or a vest, or when it helps the person perform certain tasks.

A regulated health professional is defined as a member of one of the following colleges:

- 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

## **4.3 Care and Control of the Animal**

The Persons with a Disability who is accompanied by a service animal must maintain care and control of the animal at all times.

## **4.4 Allergies**

If a customer or staff member has a severe allergy to animals, which could result in health and safety concerns, the Township shall make reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals.



## **5.0 Support Persons**

The Township is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. If a support person accompanies a visiting Person with a Disability, the Township shall ensure that both persons are entitled to enter the premises together and that the Person with a Disability is not prevented from having access to the support person while on the premises.

### **5.1 When a Support Person may be Required**

The Township may require a visiting person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the Person with a Disability or the health and safety of others on the premises.

### **5.2 Fees and Admission – Waiver of Payment**

If the Township requires a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, the Township will waive payment of the amount, if any, payable in respect to the support person's admission to the premises.

## **6.0 Notice of Temporary Disruption**

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities the Township of Wollaston will notify customers promptly.

### **6.1 Unplanned Service Disruptions**

This clearly posted notice will include:

- Information about the reason for the disruption,
- Its anticipated length of time, and
- A description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Notice may be given by posting the information at a conspicuous place at the municipal office and other relevant premises owned or operated by the

municipality, and by posting it on the municipality's website or by such other method as is reasonable in the circumstances.

## **6.2 Planned Service Disruptions**

In the event of a planned disruption to occur on a specified date(s), notice shall be provided:

- On-site,
- The municipal website, and
- Contact directly with an individual with a pre-scheduled appointment, as applicable.

## **7.0 Training**

The Township of Wollaston will provide accessible customer service training to:

- All employees and volunteers,
- Anyone involved in developing our policies, and
- Anyone who provides goods, services, or facilities to customers on our behalf.

### **7.1 Training Schedule**

Staff will be trained on accessible customer service before their work term begins or as soon as practicable after beginning work. Any additional training that is specific or niche to a position will be conducted within thirty (30) days after being hired.

### **7.2 Training Subjects**

Training will include:

- The purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard,
- The Township of Wollaston's policies related to the Customer Service Standard in Ontario Regulation 191/11,
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities,
- How to interact with Persons with Disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support

- person,
- How to use the equipment or devices available on-site or otherwise that may help with providing goods, services, or facilities to Persons with Disabilities, and
- What to do if a Person with a Disability is having difficulty in accessing the Township of Wollaston's goods, services, or facilities.

Staff will also be trained when changes are made to our accessible customer service policies.

### **7.3 Training Records**

Training records shall be kept, including the dates when the training is provided, number of individuals to whom the training was provided and the signature of all those individuals trained on a particular date.

## **8.0 Employment Standards**

The Employment Standard builds upon the existing requirements under the Ontario Human Rights Code in relation to how to accommodate individuals with disabilities throughout the job application process and the employment relationship. It applies in respect to employees and does not apply to volunteers and other non-paid individuals.

### **8.1 Recruitment**

The Township of Wollaston shall notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodations for applications with disabilities:

- During the recruitment process when job applicants are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process,
- If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, the Township of Wollaston shall consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation that takes into account the applicant's disability,
- Notify successful applicants of the policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

## **8.2 Employee Supports**

The Township of Wollaston will inform employees of the policies used to support employees with disabilities, including policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability. The Township will provide this information to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment and provide updated information to all employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodation that takes into account an employees' accessibility needs due to disability.

## **8.3 Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees**

In addition, and where an employee with a disability requests it, the Township of Wollaston will consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for:

- Information that is needed in order to perform the employees' job,
- Information that is generally available to employees in the workplace,
- Consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

## **8.4 Workplace Emergency Response Information**

If an employee's disability is such that workplace emergency response information is necessary and the Township is aware of the need for accommodation, this information shall be provided to employees. In addition, this information shall be provided, with the employee's consent, to the person designated to provide assistance.

The information shall undergo review when the employee moves to a different location, when the employee's overall accommodation needs, or plans are reviewed and when the Township reviews its general emergency response plan.

## **8.5 Documented Individual Accommodation Plan**

A written process for the development and maintenance of documented individual accommodation plans shall be developed for employees with disabilities. If requested, these plans shall include information regarding

accessible formats and communication supports. If requested, the plans shall include individualized workplace emergency response information.

## **8.6 Return to Work Process**

The Township shall have in place a documented return to work process for employees returning to work due to a disability and requiring disability-related accommodations. This return-to-work process shall outline the steps that the Township shall take to facilitate the return to work.

## **8.7 Performance Management and Career Development and Redeployment**

The Township shall take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans when providing career development, performance management and when considering redeployment.

## **9.0 Feedback Process**

The Township of Wollaston welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Customer feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns.

Customers who wish to provide feedback on the way the Township of Wollaston provides goods, services or facilities to Persons with Disabilities can provide feedback in the following way(s):

- Through the Barrier Report on the website,
- In person,
- By telephone, and
- By email.

All feedback, including complaints, will be handled in the following manner:

- A notification will be given to the Clerk Administrator or designate

Customers can expect to hear back within seven (7) business days.

The Township of Wollaston will make sure our feedback process is accessible to Persons with Disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports, on request.

## **10.0 Notice of Availability of Documents**

The Township of Wollaston will notify the public that documents related to accessible customer service, are available upon request by contacting the Clerk Administrator or designate.

In addition, a copy of this policy is available on the Township's website under the Accessibility Section.

The Township of Wollaston will provide this document in an accessible format or with communication support, on request. We will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the format or communication support. We will provide the accessible format in a timely manner and, at no additional cost.

## **11. Modifications to This or Other Policies**

Any policies of the Township of Wollaston that do not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity for Persons with Disabilities will be modified or removed.

### **Administration**

The Clerk Administrator or designate shall implement and administer the terms of this policy and shall establish related operating procedures as required.

### **Cross Reference**

Other relevant documents and legislation:

- [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#),
- [Accessible Customer Service Policy](#),
- [Accessible Workplace Policy](#),
- [Early and Safe Return to Work](#),
- [Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11](#),

- [Ontario Human Rights Code](#),
- [Township of Wollaston's Accessibility Advisory Committee](#),
- [Township of Wollaston's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#), and
- [Township of Wollaston's Transportation Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#).

## **PURPOSE OF THE ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 2005 AND REQUIREMENTS OF THE CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD**

### **1. Why does Ontario need accessibility stands?**

Several laws in Ontario address accessibility and some requirements have existed since the 1980's. Since then, progress on accessibility has been made in some areas and by some organizations.

Despite this, accessibility remains limited. People with disabilities still do not have the equal access to services, employment, transportation, information, or buildings that others in Ontario enjoy. They cannot count on accessibility being available. The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 was passed with the goal of creating standards to improve accessibility across the province.

### **2. What is the Accessibility for Ontarians Act, 2005 (AODA)?**

AODA Section 1. Recognizing the history of discrimination against persons with disabilities in Ontario, the purpose of this Act is to benefit all Ontarians by,

- (a) developing, implementing, and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures, and premises on or before January 1, 2025, and

- (b) providing for the involvement of persons with disabilities, of the Government of Ontario and of representatives of industries and various sectors of the economy in the development of the accessibility standards.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), is a law passed by the Ontario legislature that allows the government to develop specific standards of accessibility and to enforce them. The standards are made into laws called regulations, and they provide the details to help meet the goal of the AODA. The AODA is the foundation on which the standards are built.

The purpose of the accessibility standards is to move organizations in Ontario forward on accessibility. The standards will set requirements in a number of key areas and will be reviewed at least every five years. New requirements may be added. Ontario will move step by step towards accessibility that is widespread and commonplace, accessibility that people can count on, on a daily basis. In this way Ontario will benefit from the contributions, involvement, and spending power of people with disabilities.

Further, increasing accessibility will help prepare Ontario for the future. As the population ages, the numbers of people with disabilities will increase. Visitors and tourists, along with their friends and family will need to travel, shop, use programs, services, and information and to access buildings, parks, and other places in a way that is accessible to them.

### **3. What other accessibility standards are expected?**

The customer service standard is the first standard developed under the AODA. Other proposed standards are being developed in the areas of transportation, information and communications, employment, and the built environment. Like the customer service standard, the other proposed standards are being developed by standards development committees. The committees are made up of the business community, the broader public sector, and the Ontario government.



#### **4. How does AODA relate to the customer service standard?**

In addition to being the foundation for the customer service standard, the AODA has some specific requirements and rules that must be considered when reading the standard. The key areas of the AODA that should be considered are outlined below:

##### **(i) Who is a person with a disability?**

The definition of a disability under the AODA is the same as the definition of disability in the Ontario Human Rights Code. This is the definition of a disability that applies to the customer service standard.

AODA Section 2. In this Act, “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 wheel chair or other remedial device,
- (b) a condition of mental impairment or a development 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 insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act 1997.

The definition includes disabilities of different severity, visible as well as non-visible disabilities, and disabilities the effects which may come and go.

Example: A person with arthritis has a disability that over time may increase in severity.

Example: A person with a brain injury has a disability that is not visible

Example: A person with multiple sclerosis has a disability that causes her to experience periods when the condition does not have an effect on her daily routine and other periods when it does.

It is important to understand that information about a disability is personal and private and must be treated confidentially. In most cases it will not be necessary to ask for proof of a disability. Through implementing the customer service standard, accessibility will simply become part of everyday service delivery. Some providers such as schools, colleges and universities may require proof of disability because of the type of services that they provide. In such cases, these providers may be subject to privacy-related laws with respect to that information.

## **(ii) The customer service standard and other laws**

AODA Section 3 Nothing in this Act or in the regulations diminishes in any way the legal obligations of the Government of Ontario or of any person or organization with respect to persons with disabilities that are imposed under other Act or otherwise imposed by law.

AODA Section 38. If a provision of this Act, of an accessibility standard or of any other regulation conflicts with a provision of any other Act or regulation, the provision that provides the highest level of accessibility for persons with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, employment, accommodation, buildings, structures, or premises shall prevail.

There are other laws related to accessibility that may apply to organizations covered by the customer service standard, such as the Ontario Building Code Act, 1992 and the Ontario Human Rights Code. The AODA and the customer service standard do not replace or change what you must do under these and any other laws. For example, a provider must still comply with the Ontario Human Rights Code, which prohibits discrimination on the

basis of disability in goods, services or facilities, accommodations, contracts, employment, and vocational organizations. The AODA and the customer service standards have not changed the rules that exist under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Where the standard sets different rules than other laws, a provider may have to comply with both. For example, a provider must comply with the rules of the Ontario Human Rights Code, in addition to new rules under the AODA and the standard such as to provide a process for receiving feedback about how it improves service to people with disabilities.

**(iii) What if the standard conflicts with other laws?**

If two laws conflict with one another, Section 38 of the AODA states that the law that provides the higher level of accessibility is the law that must be followed.

**(iv) How will this standard be enforced?**

The AODA allows for enforcement of the customer service standards through inspections, compliance orders and administrative penalties.

## **1.0 DEFINITIONS**

“Accessibility Coordinator” shall mean the person appointed by Council as Accessibility Coordinator for the Township of Wollaston.

“Assistive devices” shall mean an auxiliary aid such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids (i.e., canes, crutches, wheelchairs, or hearing aids).

“Disabilities” shall mean the same as definition of disability found in the Ontario Human Rights Code.

“Employees” shall mean every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Township of Wollaston, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise.

“Persons with Disabilities” shall mean those individuals that are afflicted with a disability as defined under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

“Service Animals” shall mean any animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability.

“Support persons” shall mean any person whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member, friend to who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communications, personal care, or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

## **2.0 EXCLUSIONS**

This Accessibility Customer Service Standards Policy shall not apply during any period where Council has declared a “State of Emergency” as defined under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act.

## **3.0 DOCUMENTATION**

The Township of Wollaston shall upon request, give a copy of the policies, practices and procedures required under the Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service to any person.

## **BEST PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES**

Accessible Customer Service follows four basic principles:

- Dignity
- Independence
- Integration
- Equal Opportunity
  - What can I do to help people with disabilities access our services?
  - Ask how you can help
  - Offer a variety of methods of communication
  - Understand the nature and scope of the service you offer

## TERMINOLOGY

### Talk about Disabilities – Chose the Right Word

Words can influence and reinforce the public's perception of people with disabilities. They can create either a positive view of people with disabilities or an indifferent, negative depiction.

Here are some general tips that can help make your communication and interactions with or about people with all types of disabilities more successful.

- Use disability or disabled, not handicap, or handicapped.
- Never use terms such as retarded, dumb, psycho, moron or crippled. These words are very demeaning and disrespectful to people with disabilities.
- Remember to put people first. It is proper to say person with a disability, rather than disabled person.
- If you do not know someone or if you are not familiar with the disability, it is better to wait until the individual describes his/her situation to you, rather than to make your own assumptions. Many types of disabilities have similar characteristics, and your assumptions may be wrong.

The following preferred words and phrases will help you choose language that is neither demeaning nor hurtful. People with disabilities prefer these terms.

<b>Instead of:</b>	<b>Please use</b>
Person who has cerebral palsy.	Afflicted by cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, arthritis, etc.
Person who has multiple sclerosis.	
Person who has arthritis, etc.	
Person with a disability.	

Aged (the)	Seniors
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Autistic	A person with autism. A person who has autism.
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<b>Instead of:</b>	<b>Please use</b>
Birth defect, congenital defect, deformity	A person who has a congenital disability. A person with a disability since birth.

Blind (the), visually impaired (the)	A person who is blind. A person with a vision disability. A person with vision loss. A person with a visual impairment. A person with low vision.
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Brain damaged	A person with a brain injury. A person with a head injury.
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Confined to a wheelchair, wheelchair bound	A person who uses a wheelchair.
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Crazy, insane, lunatic, psycho, mental, mental patient, maniac, neurotic, psychotic, unsound mind, schizophrenic	A person with a mental health disability. A person who has depression. A person with schizophrenia
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Cripple, crippled, lame person	A person with a disability. A person with a mobility impairment or, more specifically, a person who walks with crutches. A person who uses a walker. A person who uses a mobility aid. A person with arthritis, etc.
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Deaf (the), hearing impaired (the)	A person who is deaf (person with profound hearing loss who communicates using sign language. A person who is deafened (deaf later in life.) A person who is hard of hearing (person with hearing loss) who communicates primarily by speech.) A person with a hearing loss. When referring to the deaf community & their culture (whose preferred mode of communication is sign language) it is acceptable to use "the Deaf."
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Deaf and dumb, deaf mute	A person who is deaf without speech
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Deaf-Blind (the)	Person who is deaf-blind (person who has any combination of visual and auditory impairments.)
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Differently Abled	A person with a disability.
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Disabled (the)	People with disabilities.
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Elderly (the)	Seniors, older adults.
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Epileptic	Person who has epilepsy.
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Fits, spells, attacks	Seizures.
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Handicapped (the)	Person with a disability. The term handicapped may be used when referring to an environmental or attitudinal barrier as in "a person who is handicapped by a set of stairs leading to the entrance."
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Hidden disability	Non-visible disability.
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Invalid	Person with a disability.
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Learning disabled, learning Disordered, the dyslexics	A person with a learning disability or people with learning disabilities.
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Mentally retarded, idiot, simple, Retarded, feeble minded, imbecile	A person with an intellectual disability. A person with a developmental disability.
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Midget, Dwarf	A person of short stature. A person who has a form of dwarfism. A little person. A person diagnosed with "Achondroplasia, SED, or what ever their specific diagnoses is", a form of dwarfism.
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Mongoloid, Mongolism	Person with Down Syndrome. One can use this terminology only when it is directly relevant. A person with an intellectual or developmental disability
Normal	Person who is not disabled, who is able bodied. Specifically, a person who is sighted, a hearing person, a person who is ambulatory.
Patient	Person with a disability. The word patient may be used when referring to a relationship between medical professional and a client.
Physically challenged	Person with a physical disability.
Spastic	Person who has muscle spasms.
Stutterer	A person with a speech Impairment or impediment.
Victim of/suffers from/ stricken with cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, arthritis, etc.	Person who has cerebral palsy. Person who has multiple sclerosis, etc. Person with a disability
Visually impaired (the)	A person with a visual impairment. A person with low vision. A person with vision loss. A person with a vision disability
For additional information visit the Ministry of Community and Social Services website at [ <a href="http://www.mcscs.gov.on.ca/mcss">http://www.mcscs.gov.on.ca/mcss</a> ]	

## **How to Welcome Individuals with Disabilities**

Did you know that just over 15.5% of Ontarians have a disability? That is 1 in every 7 Ontarians and as the population ages that number will grow.

People with disabilities travel, shop and do business in your community with their friends and families, just like everyone else. By providing service that welcomes people with disabilities, you can offer better service to everyone. Treating all your customers with individual respect and courtesy is at the heart of excellent customer service.

You can broaden your customer base by welcoming everyone to your store, restaurant, or services, including customers with disabilities. By learning how to serve people with disabilities, you can attract more customers and improve your service to everyone.

### **Here are some ways you can provide better service to you customers with disabilities:**

- ◆ Treat people with disabilities with the same respect and consideration you have for everyone else.
- ◆ Patience, optimism, and a willingness to find a way to communicate are your best tools.
- ◆ Smile, relax, and keep in mind that people with disabilities are just people.
- ◆ Do not make assumptions about what type of disability or disabilities a person has.
- ◆ Some disabilities are not visible. Take the time to get to know your customers' needs.
- ◆ Be patient. People with some kinds of disabilities may take a little longer to understand and respond.
- ◆ If you are not sure what to do, ask your customers, "May I help you?"
- ◆ If you cannot understand what someone is saying, just politely ask again.
- ◆ Ask before you offer to help – do not just jump in. Your customers with disabilities know if they need help and how you can provide it.
- ◆ Find a good way to communicate. A good start is to listen carefully.
- ◆ Look at your customer, but do not stare. Speak directly to a person with a disability, not to their interpreter or someone who is with them.

- ◆ Use plain language and speak in short sentences.
- ◆ Do not touch or address service animals – they are working and have to pay attention at all times.
- ◆ Ask permission before touching a wheelchair or a piece of equipment.
- ◆ Every business should have emergency procedures for customers with disabilities. Make sure you know what they are.

## **What you need to know about individuals with vision disabilities**

Vision disabilities reduce one's ability to see clearly. Very few people are totally blind. Many have limited vision such as tunnel vision, where a person has a loss of peripheral or side vision, or a lack of central vision, which means they cannot see straight ahead. Some can see the outlines of objects while others can see the direction of light.

Vision's disabilities can restrict an individual's ability to read signs, locate landmarks or see hazards. In some cases, it may be difficult to tell if a person has a vision disability. Others may use a guide dog or white cane. Vision loss can result in:

- Difficulty reading or seeing faces
- Difficulty maneuvering in unfamiliar places
- Inability to differentiate colours or distances
- A narrow field of vision
- The need for bright light, or contrast
- Night blindness

*Here are some tips on serving individuals with Vision Disabilities:*

- ◆ Identify yourself when you approach your customers and speak directly to them.
- ◆ Speak normally and clearly.
- ◆ Never touch your customer without asking permission unless it is an emergency.
- ◆ If you offer assistance, wait until you receive permission.
- ◆ Offer your arm (the elbow) to guide the person and walk slowly.
- ◆ Do not touch or address service animals – they are working and have to pay attention at all times.
- ◆ If you are giving directions or verbal information, be precise and clear. For example, if you are approaching a door or obstacle, say so.
- ◆ Do not just assume the individual cannot see you.

- ◆ Do not leave your customer in the middle of a room. Show them to a chair or guide them to a comfortable location.
- ◆ Identify landmarks or other details to orient your customer to the environment around them.
- ◆ Do not walk away without saying good-bye.
- ◆ Be patient. Things may take a little longer.

## **What you need to know about individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing**

People who have hearing loss may be deaf or hard of hearing. Like other disabilities, hearing loss has a wide variety of degrees. Remember, individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing may require assistive devices when communicating. Hearing loss can cause problems in distinguishing certain frequencies, sounds or words. A person who is deaf, deafened, or hard-of hearing may be unable to:

- Use a public telephone
- Understand speech in noisy environments
- Pronounce words clearly enough to be understood by strangers

*Here are some tips on serving individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing:*

- ◆ Always ask if you can be of help. Do not shout.
- ◆ Attract the customers attention before speaking. The best way is a gentle touch on the shoulder or gently waving your hand.
- ◆ Make sure you are in a well-lighted area where your customers can see your face.
- ◆ Look at and speak directly to your customer. Address your customer, not the interpreter.
- ◆ If necessary, ask if another method of communicating would be easier, for example a pen and paper.
- ◆ Do not put your hands in front of your face when speaking.
- ◆ Be clear and precise when giving directions and repeat or rephrase if necessary. Make sure you have been understood.
- ◆ Do not touch or address service animals – they are working and have to pay attention at all times.
- ◆ Any personal (e.g., financial) matters should be discussed in a private room to avoid other people overhearing.
- ◆ Be patient. Communication for people who are deaf may be different because their first language may not be English. It may be American Sign Language (ASL).

- ◆ If the person uses a hearing aid, try to speak in an area with few competing sounds.



## **What you need to know about individuals who are deaf blind**

A person who is deaf blind cannot see or hear to some extent. This results in greater difficulties in accessing information and managing daily activities. Deaf blindness interferes with communication, learning, orientation, and mobility. People who are deaf blind communicate using various sign language systems, Braille, telephone devices, communication boards and any combination thereof. Most people who are deaf blind will be accompanied by an intervenor, a professional who helps with communicating. Intervenors are trained in special sign language that involves touching the hands of the client in a two-hand, manual alphabet, or finger spelling, and may guide and interpret for their client.

*Here are some tips on serving customers who are deaf blind:*

- ◆ Do not assume what a person can or cannot do. Some people who are deaf blind have some sight or hearing, while other have neither.
- ◆ An individual who is deaf blind is likely to explain to you how to communicate with them or give you an assistance card or a note explaining how to communicate with them.
- ◆ Speak directly to the individual as you normally would, not to the intervenor.
- ◆ Identify yourself to the intervenor when you approach the individual who is deaf blind.
- ◆ Do not touch or address service animals – they are working and have to pay attention at all times.
- ◆ Never touch a person who is deaf-blind suddenly or without permission unless it is an emergency.

## **What you need to know about individuals with physical disabilities**

There are many types and degrees of physical disabilities, and not all require a wheelchair. Physical disabilities include a range of functional limitations from minor difficulties in moving or coordinating one part of the body, through muscle weakness, tremors, and paralysis. People who have arthritis, heart or lung conditions or amputations may also have difficulty with moving, standing, or sitting. It may be difficult to identify a person with a physical disability. Physical disabilities can be congenital such as Muscular Dystrophy; or acquired, such as tendonitis. A physical disability may affect an individual's ability to:

- Perform manual tasks such as holding a pen, turning a key or grip a doorknob
- Move around independently
- Control the speed or coordination of movements
- Reach, pull or manipulate objects
- Have strength or endurance

*Here are some tips on servicing individuals who have physical disabilities:*

- ◆ Speak normally and directly to the individual. Do not speak to someone who is with them.
- ◆ People with physical disabilities often have their own ways of doing things. Ask before you help.
- ◆ Be patient. Individuals will identify their needs to you.
- ◆ Do not touch assistive devices, including wheelchairs, unnecessarily unless its an emergency.
- ◆ Provide the individual information about accessible features of the immediate environment (automatic doors, accessible washrooms, etc.).
- ◆ Remove obstacles and rearrange furniture to ensure clear passage.

## **What you need to know about individuals with speech or language impairments**

Some people have problems communicating. It could be the result of cerebral palsy, hearing loss or another condition that makes it difficult to pronounce words, causes slurring or stuttering, or not being able to express oneself or understand written or spoken language. Some people who have severe difficulties may use communication boards or other assistive devices. Speech disabilities involve the partial or total loss of the ability to speak. Typical disabilities include problems with:

- Pronunciation
- Pitch and loudness
- Hoarseness or breathiness
- Stuttering or slurring

*Here are some tips on serving individuals with speech or language impairments:*

- ◆ Just because a person has one disability does not mean they have another. For example, if an individual has difficulty speaking; do not assume they have an intellectual or developmental disability as well.
- ◆ If you do not understand, ask the individual to repeat the information.
- ◆ If you are able, ask questions that can be answered 'yes' or 'no'.
- ◆ Be patient and polite and give the individual whatever time he/she needs to get his/her point across.
- ◆ Do not interrupt or finish the individual's sentences. Wait for them to finish.
- ◆ Patience, respect, and a willingness to find a way to communicate are your best tools.

## **What you need to know about individuals with mental health disabilities**

People with mental health disabilities look like anyone else. You will not know that an individual has a mental health disability unless you are informed of it. And usually, it will not affect your customer service at all.

But if someone is experiencing difficulty in controlling their symptoms or is in a crisis, you may need to help out. Be calm and professional and let the individual tell you how you can best help.

Mental Health disabilities include a range of disorders however there are three main types of mental health disability:

- Anxiety
- Mood
- Behavioral

People with mental health disabilities may seem edgy or irritated; act aggressively; be perceived as pushy or abrupt; be unable to make a decision; start laughing or get angry for no apparent reason.

*Here are some tips on serving individuals who have mental health disabilities.*

- ◆ Treat a person with a mental health disability with the same respect and consideration you have for everyone else.
- ◆ Be confident and reassuring. Listen carefully and work with the individual to meet their needs.
- ◆ If someone appears to be in a crisis, ask them to tell you the best way to help.

## **What you need to know about individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities**

People with intellectual or developmental disabilities may have difficulty doing many things most of us take for granted. These disabilities can mildly or profoundly limit one's ability to learn. You may not be able to know that someone has this disability unless you are told, or you notice the way people act, ask questions, or use body language. Intellectual disabilities affect a person's ability to think and reason. It may be caused by genetic factors such as Down's Syndrome, exposure to environmental toxins, such as Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, brain trauma or psychiatric disorders. A person with an intellectual disorder may have difficulty with:

- Understanding spoken and written information
- Conceptual information
- Perception of sensory information
- Memory

As much as possible, treat individuals with an intellectual or developmental disability like anyone else. They may understand more than you think, and they will appreciate you treating them with respect.

*Here are some tips on serving individuals who have an intellectual or developmental disability:*

- ◆ Do not assume what a person can or cannot do.
- ◆ Use plain language and speak in short sentences.
- ◆ Make sure the individual understands what you have said.
- ◆ If you cannot understand what is being said, do not pretend. Just ask again.
- ◆ Provide one piece of information at a time.
- ◆ Be supportive and patient.
- ◆ Speak directly to the individual, not to their companion or attendant.

## **What you need to know about individuals who have learning disabilities**

Learning disabilities can result in a host of different communication difficulties for people. They can be subtle, as in having difficulty reading or more pronounced, but they can interfere with your customer's ability to receive, express or process information. You may not be able to know that someone has one of these disabilities unless you are told, or you notice the way people act, ask questions, or use body language. Learning disabilities include a range of disorders that effect verbal and non-verbal information acquisition, retention, understanding and processing. People with a learning disability have average or above average intelligence but take in and process information and express knowledge in different ways. Learning disabilities can result in:

- Difficulties in reading
- Problem solving
- Time management
- Way finding
- Processing information.

*Here are some tips on serving individuals with learning disabilities:*

- ◆ Patience and a willingness to find a way to communicate are your best tools.
- ◆ When you know that someone with a learning disability needs help, ask how you can best help.
- ◆ Speak normally and clearly, and directly to the individual.
- ◆ Take some time – people with some kinds of learning disabilities may take a little longer to understand and respond.
- ◆ Try to find ways to provide information in a way that works best for them. For example, have a paper and pen handy.
- ◆ If you are dealing with a child, be patient, encouraging and supportive.

- ◆ Be courteous and patient and the individual will let you know how to best provide service in a way that works for them.

## **What you need to know about individuals who have other types of disabilities**

Smell disabilities can involve the inability to sense smells or a hypersensitivity to odors and smells. A person with a smelling disability may have allergies to certain odors, scents or chemicals or may be unable to identify dangerous gases, smoke, fumes, and spoiled food.

Touch disabilities can affect a person's ability to sense texture, temperature, vibration, or pressure. Touch sensations may be reduced or heightened resulting in a hypersensitivity to touch, temperature, or the opposite, numbness, and the inability to feel touch sensations.

Taste disabilities can limit the experience of the four primary taste sensations: sweet, bitter, salty, and sour. A person with a taste disability may be unable to identify spoiled food or noxious substances.

Other disabilities result from a range of other conditions, accidents, illnesses, and diseases including ALS, asthma, diabetes, cancer, HIV/AIDs, environmental sensitivities, seizure disorders, heart disease, stroke, and joint replacement.

Disabilities are not always visible or easy to distinguish.



## **What you need to know when visiting or delivering to an individual with disabilities at home**

*Here are some tips on serving individuals with disabilities at home:*

- ◆ Do not arrive unexpectedly and confirm the details before you arrive.
- ◆ Be patient. You may need to wait a few moments for the individual to open the door.
- ◆ Introduce yourself clearly. Some individuals may not be able to read identity cards and may instead have a password. Check before you visit.
- ◆ Keep the individual up to date on what you are doing.
- ◆ If you need to move some of the individuals' possessions, make sure that you leave their house exactly as when you arrived. For example, you do not want someone with a vision disability to trip because you moved the sofa.
- ◆ If you cannot complete the job, clearly explain what will happen next. Make another appointment and leave a contact number in case there are problems.

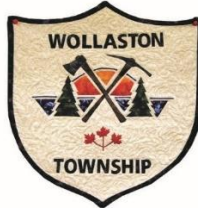
## **What you need to know when dealing with individuals with disabilities over the phone**

*Here are some tips on serving individuals with disabilities on the phone:*

- ◆ Speak normally, clear, and directly
- ◆ Do not worry about how their voice sounds. Concentrate on what is being said.
- ◆ Be patient, do not interrupt and do not finish the individual's sentence. Give the individual time to explain him/herself.
- ◆ Do not try to guess what the individual is saying. If you do not understand, do not pretend. Just ask again.
- ◆ If you are not certain what was said, just repeat or rephrase what you have heard.
- ◆ If a telephone customer is using an interpreter of a TTY line, just speak normally to the person, not to the interpreter.
- ◆ If the individual has great difficulty communicating, make arrangements to call back when its convenient to speak with someone else.

## **Sample Forms**

1. Barrier to Accessibility Report
2. Notice – Expected service disruption
3. Notice – Unexpected disruption in service
4. Notice – Training Record



**The Corporation of the Township of Wollaston  
Barrier to Accessibility Report**

**Contact Person:** Clerk/Administrator or designate

**Contact Information:** [clerk@wollaston.ca](mailto:clerk@wollaston.ca)

Would you like to provide an image of the issues?

YES: \_\_\_\_\_ NO: \_\_\_\_\_

FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

LAST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_  
(If you wish to be reached by phone.)

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

WHERE PROBLEM IS LOCATED: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PROVIDE ANY ADDITIONAL DETAILS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **EXPECTED SERVICE DISRUPTION**

There will be a scheduled service disruption at the \_\_\_\_\_  
municipal office. The disruptions will be from \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_.

These disruptions include:

- \_\_\_\_\_(repairs to doors)
- \_\_\_\_\_(repairs to technology)

On behalf of the Township of Wollaston we would like to thank you for your  
patience in this matter.

Clerk/Administrator  
613-337-5731

## UNEXPECTED DISRUPTION IN SERVICE

There is currently an unexpected service disruption. The estimated time of the service disruption will be from \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_.

These disruptions include:

- \_\_\_\_ (repairs to doors)
- \_\_\_\_ (repairs to technology)

On behalf of the Township of Wollaston we would like to thank you for your patience in this matter.

Clerk/Administrator  
613-337-5731

# ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY

## TRAINING RECORD

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Training: \_\_\_\_\_

Trainer: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature : \_\_\_\_\_