



Accessible Customer Service

Sources:
Accessibility Directorate of Ontario
City of Mississauga
Region of Peel

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Background

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) was passed by the Ontario legislature with the goal of creating standards to improve accessibility across the province.

The AODA allows the government to develop specific standards of accessibility that are designed to help make Ontario more accessible.

One of the specific standards that has been developed, and made law, is the Accessible Customer Service Standard (O. Reg. 429/07). This standard details specific requirements for all service providers.

The Corporation of the City of Oshawa must:

- Establish policies, practices and procedures on providing goods or services to people with Disabilities;
- Ensure that policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity;
- Set a policy on allowing people to use their own personal assistive devices to access goods and use of services and about other measures offered to enable them to access to the City's goods and Services;
- Communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account their disability;
- Allow people with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal in areas of the City's premises that are open to the public, unless the animal is excluded by law. If a service animal is excluded by law, use other measures to provide services to the person with a disability;
- Permit people with disabilities who use a support person to bring that person with them while accessing goods or services in the City's premises open to the public or third parties;
- Where admission fees are charged, provide notice ahead of time on what admission, if any, would be charged for a support person of a person with a disability;
- Provide notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access or use the City's goods or services are temporarily disrupted;
- Train staff, volunteers, contractors and any other people who interact with the public or other third parties on the City's behalf on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard;
- Train staff, volunteers, contractors and any other people who are involved in developing the City's policies, practices and procedures on the provision of goods or services on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard; and,

- Establish a process for people to provide feedback on how the City provides goods or services to people with disabilities and how the City will respond to any feedback and take action on any complaints.

What is Accessible Customer Service?

The City of Oshawa is committed to providing customer service to persons with disabilities in a manner that:

- respects their **dignity** and **independence**;
- is **integrated** as fully as practicable into the method of service delivery;
- ensures an **opportunity equal** to that given to other customers to obtain and use the City's goods and services; and
- allows persons with disabilities to benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in a similar way to other customers.

Accessible customer service can mean many things. Mostly, it is the understanding that each individual may need a slightly different type of accommodation.

For example, a person who is blind may need to have information read aloud to them; an individual with a learning disability may need to have instructions written down; and someone who uses a wheelchair may need help in finding a route they can use.

Accessible customer service is **good** customer service -- courteous, helpful and prompt.

What can I do?

Always start with people first. In language, that means saying "person with a disability", rather than "a disabled person". In any interaction, it means addressing the person's service needs, rather than focusing on the disability.

Let's take some time to understand the definition of different disabilities and some tips to assist you in providing accessible customer service.

A "**Disability**" as defined by the AODA includes:

- any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness;
- a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- a mental disorder; or
- an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*; ("handicap").

Each table below defines a specific category of disability and outlines some tips to help you provide service to your customers:

Hearing Disabilities:

| Definition: | Tips For Serving Customers: |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Deaf</i> - severe to profound hearing loss • <i>Hard of Hearing</i> - a person who uses their residual hearing and speech to communicate • <i>Deafened</i> - caused to hear poorly or not at all | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak directly to your customer, not the support person • Identify yourself to the support person • Do not put your hands in front of your face when speaking • If necessary, ask if another method of communication would be easier, for example, using a pen and paper |

Deafblind Disability:

| Definition: | Tips For Serving Customers: |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot see or hear to some degree • Many will be accompanied by a support person (A professional who helps with communication by using sign language that involves touching the hands of the client) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak directly to your customer, not the support person • Identify yourself to the support person The customer is likely to explain to you how to communicate with an assistance card or a note • explaining how to communicate with them. |

Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities:

| Definition: | Tips For Serving Customers: |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intellectual development and capacity that is below average • Can mildly or profoundly limit ability to learn, communicate, do everyday activities and live independently • May be an invisible disability • They may understand you more than you know | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't assume what customer can or cannot do • Use plain language • Take your time, be patient • Ask: "Do you understand this?" • Provide one piece of information at a time – step-by-step instruction • Offer information in simple concepts |

Learning Disabilities:

| Definition: | Tips For Serving Customers: |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affects how a person acquires, interprets, retains or takes in information • In many cases an individual has average or above-average intelligence • May affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language based learning • Mathematics • Writing, fine motor skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take some time, be patient • Demonstrate a willingness to assist • Speak normally, clearly and directly to your customer • Provide information in a way that works for your customer (i.e. pen and paper) • Be prepared to explain any materials you provide |

Mental Health Disabilities:

| Definition: | Tips For Serving Customers: |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional limitations associated with mental health disabilities can vary from mild to severe, and may fluctuate in time. • Mental health disabilities may interfere with a person's abilities in the following three areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental alertness • Concentration and organization • Dealing with stress and anxiety | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat customer with the same level of respect and consideration as everyone else • Be confident, reassuring and calm • Do not be confrontational • If the customer is in crisis, ask them to tell you the best way to help • Take the customer seriously • Don't take things personally |

Speech or Language Disabilities:

| Definition: | Tips For Serving Customers: |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have problems communicating • May be difficult to pronounce words, slurring or stuttering • May use communication boards or other assistive devices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't make assumptions • Give whatever time they need to get their point across • Ask questions that can be answered 'yes' or 'no', if possible • Don't interrupt or finish your customer's sentences • May have to use pen and paper • Say: "I don't understand, can you repeat that please?" |

Physical Disabilities:

| Definition: | Tips For Serving Customers: |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May restrict a person in the following ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control or speed of movements • Coordination and balance • Ability to grasp some objects • Ability to walk long distances • Ability to sit or stand for prolonged periods • May be present at birth; as a result of disease or injury and may be temporary or permanent in nature | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak directly to the customer • Ask before you help • Respect personal space • Don't move any items they may have • Describe what you are going to do beforehand • Don't leave your customer in an awkward, dangerous or undignified position |

Vision Disabilities:

| Definition: | Tips For Serving Customers: |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most individuals who are legally blind have some remaining vision - very few are totally blind • Low or no vision can restrict ability to read signs, locate landmarks, or see hazards • May use guide dog or white cane • May need to view written documents in large print, or with help of magnifier | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't assume customer cannot see you • Speak directly to the customer • Offer your elbow to guide; if they accept, walk slowly, wait for permission • Identify landmarks • Be precise and descriptive with information • Don't leave your customer in an awkward, dangerous or undignified position |

Most importantly, recognize your nervousness and relax! People with disabilities are generally aware they may need some accommodations and will work with you. Just remember to ask how you can help.

How should I interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive equipment, the assistance a service animal or a support person?

1. **First**, let's take some time to understand what these different assistive options are:

- “**Assistive Equipment**” are devices that people may bring with them or that are already on the premises. They are used to assist persons with disabilities in carrying out activities or in accessing the services provided by the City of Oshawa.

Assistive devices include, but are not limited to: wheelchairs, walkers, white canes used by people who are blind or who have low vision, note taking devices, portable magnifiers, recording machines, assistive listening devices, personal oxygen tanks and devices for grasping.

- “**Service Animal**” is an animal which is specially trained to assist an individual with disabilities.

An animal is a “Service Animal” if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by a person with a disability for reasons relating to his or her disability, for example a guide dog wearing a harness.

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a Service Animal, then a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability is required.

- “**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 or with access to goods or services.

The individual may be a paid professional, a volunteer, a family member or a friend.

2. **Next**, let’s take some time to understand how you should interact with persons with disabilities who may use one or more of these assistive options.

- Customers using **Assistive Equipment**:
 - Inappropriate to lean on or reach over them
 - Ensure that the person is permitted to enter the premises with the device and to utilize the device unless excluded by law
 - Potential barriers to the use of assistive devices must be removed where possible
 - Ensure persons with disabilities are aware of assistive devices available on the providers’ premises or otherwise supplied by the provider
 - Assistive devices must be offered in a manner that respects the person’s dignity and independence
- Customers with **Service Animals**:
 - Allowed anywhere the public has access
 - Are responsible for the care and supervision of the Service Animal
 - Are permitted to keep the animal with him or her unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises (e.g. a kitchen where food is prepared.)
 - People should avoid talking to, touching or making eye contact with the Service Animal
- Customers with **Support Persons**:

- Both persons are permitted to enter the premises together
- The person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the Support Person while on the premises
- Consent is required if confidential information is going to be shared when a Support Person is present
- Speak directly to your customer, not the Support Person

What happens if for some reason we cannot serve a person with a disability?

It is possible that from time to time there will be disruptions in service, such as an elevator under repair, renovations that limit access to an area, or technology that is temporarily unavailable. If a disruption in service is planned, and expected, it is important to provide reasonable notice.

People with disabilities may often go to a lot of trouble to access services, such as booking transit or arranging a ride. By providing notice, you can save that person an unnecessary trip. Notice can be provided on the City's website, by telephone, or in writing.

In the event of an unexpected disruption in service, provide notice in a variety of ways and as quickly as possible. Please refer to the City of Oshawa's Accessibility Policies available in this publication and on the City's website. Consider offering alternative methods of service while informing those that may be impacted personally.

Resources

It is important to recognize that there are available internal & external resources for you to use to assist you in delivering service to persons with disabilities:

- Review the following Corporate Policies and Procedures located on the City of Oshawa Website under the Accessibility Quick Link :
http://www.oshawa.ca/cit_hall/accessible_customer_service.asp
 - City of Oshawa Accessibility Policy
 - Respect of Service Animals and Support Persons
 - Notification of the Disruption of Service & Facility Access
 - Feedback Process
- Speak to your Supervisor and/or Manager
- Visit the Government of Ontario's website at www.AccessON.ca
- The Bell Relay Service Operator is available to assist in placing or receiving calls to/from persons who use a TTY. There is no charge for local calls. To place a call through the BCRS (Bell Canada Relay Service), call: 1-800-855-0511.
- To hire an American Sign Language-English/French interpreter contact The Canadian Hearing Society - Peterborough/Durham office 1-888-363-0373 or email brushton@chs.ca. Please note that advanced notice is required (available on a first come—first served basis). For emergency situations call 1-866-256-5142 or email OIS@answerplus.ca. For information on rates visit www.chs.ca.

- Contact the Accessibility Program Coordinator by email at access@oshawa.ca or call 905-436-5636 ext. 2288.

City of Oshawa Accessibility Policy

Purpose and Application

Under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, (AODA) 2005 all municipalities must meet the requirements of accessibility standards established by regulation. This policy establishes the accessibility standards for customer service for the City of Oshawa, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 429/07. This policy applies to City of Oshawa staff, volunteers and agents.

Definitions

As outlined in the AODA, 2005, **disability** means:

- i any degree of physical 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 impairment, 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;
- ii a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- iii a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- iv a mental disorder; or,
- v an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act*, 1997.

Accessible means customer service is provided in a manner that is capable of being easily understood or appreciated, easy to get at, capable of being reached or entered and obtainable.

Assistive Device means any device or mechanism that assists a person with a disability in accessing and benefiting from the services provided. Assistive devices may include, but are not limited to wheelchair, walker, cane, assistive listening device, visual alarms or assistive software programs.

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 or with access to goods or services.

Guide Dog means a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having the qualifications prescribed by the *Blind Persons' Rights Act* R.S.O. 1990, c. B.7, s. 1 (1).

Service Animal is an animal for a person with a disability, if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his/her disability, or if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

Policy Statement

The City of Oshawa is committed to providing exceptional and accessible service for its customers. Goods and services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of all customers. The provision of services to persons with disabilities will be integrated wherever possible. Persons with disabilities, including those that use or need the use of assistive devices and/or support persons, will be given an opportunity, equal to that given to others, to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services provided by and on behalf of the City of Oshawa.

Policy Requirements

1. Respect for Service Animals and Support Persons

- i The City shall endeavour to accommodate the public in general in its use of City facilities and services. Guide dogs and service animals shall be permitted at all City facilities except where prohibited by federal or provincial legislation, or municipal by-laws, policy or procedures. It is the City's intent to make all of its facilities and services accessible to the public to the very best of its abilities.

Reasonable behaviour is expected from those interacting with service animals. The owners of disruptive and aggressive service animals and those who interact with service animals in a negative way may be asked to leave the premises.

- ii If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, the City of Oshawa will ensure that both persons are permitted to enter a City facility, and that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the support person. The City of Oshawa may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when in a City facility, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others in the facility. If an amount is payable by a support person for admission, or otherwise, to a premise, the City of Oshawa will ensure notice is given in advance of the amount due. (Reference: Corporate Policy and Procedure: Use of Service Animals and Support Persons)

2. Notice of Temporary Disruptions

The City of Oshawa shall provide notice of disruption of services to the public. Examples of a temporary disruption include the following, but are not limited to:

- a pool closing
- a section of a sidewalk or trail closure
- an elevator malfunction

Any Notice of Disruption will contain the following:

- reason for the disruption;
- anticipated duration; and,
- alternative facilities or services.

City staff will provide public notice in at least one of the following three methods:

- notice physically posted at the site of the disruption;
- notice on City website; or,
- notice in local media.

(Reference: Corporate Policy and Procedure: Notification of the Disruption of Service & Facility Access)

3. Accessibility Training Policy

- i Every person who deals with members of the public or who participates in developing City of Oshawa's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to the public, including City staff, volunteers, and agents who provide service on behalf of the City of Oshawa, will receive training regarding the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities.
- ii The training will include the following information:
 - the purpose of the Accessibility for *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*,
 - how to interact and communicate with persons 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 support person;
 - how to use equipment made available by the City to help people with disabilities to access goods and services; and,
 - what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing City goods and services.
- iii Training will be provided:
 - to each person according to his/her needs and duties;
 - as soon as is practicable after he/she is assigned the applicable duties or when duties change;
 - when policies and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to people with disabilities change; and,
 - A record of training will be kept including dates of training, the number of staff and the training course content.

4. Feedback Process

- i Service Oshawa will accept feedback from the public concerning City of Oshawa accessibility issues in a variety of methods including:
 - phone
 - in person
 - fax
 - TTY
 - email
 - mail
- ii The request for feedback is noted on many City publications and on the City's website. All feedback is reviewed by the Customer Service Manager, Director, Manager or Supervisor in the appropriate department. Complaints are investigated and follow up is provided to

the customer if requested. (Reference: Corporate Policy and Procedure: Feedback Process)

5. Notice of Availability of Documents

The City of Oshawa will provide the public notice of the availability of documents describing the policies, practices and procedures that are put in place to comply with the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*, (O. Reg 429/07) upon request. Notice of availability will be provided on the City of Oshawa website (www.oshawa.ca) and through other printed methods. Documents will include:

- use of service animals and support persons;
- notification procedure;
- training policy; and,
- feedback process.

6. Format of Documents

- i If a legislated *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*, (Ontario Regulation 429/07) document describing a policy, practice and procedure is requested, the City will take into account the person's ability to access the information. The City of Oshawa and the person with a disability may agree upon the format to be used for the document or information.

7. Related and Supporting Documentation

- i The following documents/information are available at the City of Oshawa and show the City's commitment to accessible customer service:
- City of Oshawa Community Strategic Plan - A Caring and Responsive Community;
 - City of Oshawa Procurement Policy;
 - Accessible parking practices - free on street parking, free parking in municipal lots, free parking at meters with Accessible Parking permit;
 - Oshawa Accessibility Design Standards;
 - Recreation Access Membership Program - Practice that offers reduced enrollment and admission fees for persons with disabilities;
 - Snow Clearing and Side Yard Boulevard Grass Cutting - Practice that provides service to persons with disabilities;
 - Waste Management Assistance - program/practice that provides assistance to persons with disabilities;
 - Tax deferral - program that allows persons with disabilities tax deferral on increases over \$100 or 5%;
 - Accessible Customer Service Training - contents summary; and,
 - www.oshawa.ca.

Respect for Service Animals and Support Persons Corporate Policy and Procedure

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to establish a corporate-wide approach for the use of service animals and support persons by persons with disabilities. The objective is to:

- clarify the allowance of guide dogs and service animals in City of Oshawa facilities;
- clarify the provisions of support persons; and,
- provide documentation as required by Ontario Regulation 429/07 made under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*, 2005.

2. Sources

- *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*, 2005 – Accessibility Standard for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07), Section 4;
- Oshawa Community Strategic Plan, 2005 – Goal C: A Caring and Responsive Community - known for its community health and safety, accessibility, community cooperation and involvement, affordability and accountability to its citizens;
- City of Oshawa Accessibility Policy;
- City of Oshawa Responsible Pet Owners By-Law;
- Dog Owners' Liability Act; and,
- The Municipal Act.

3. Policy

To meet the requirements of the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) made under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2005, this Policy and Procedure has been created for City of Oshawa staff, volunteers and agents.

For the purposes of this policy, any reference to “staff” also applies to City volunteers and agents.

An animal is a “service animal” for a person with a disability, (Section 4, subsection 9 of the AODA, 2005 - Ontario Regulation 429/07),

- if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
- if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

A “guide dog” means a guide dog as defined in section 1 of the *Blind Persons Rights' Act*.

A “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 with access to goods or services.

3.1 Service Animal

This process will ensure that:

- if a person with a disability is accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal, the City of Oshawa shall permit that person to enter premises open to the public or third parties with the animal and to keep the animal with him or her unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law; and,
- if a guide dog or service animal is excluded by law from the premises, the City of Oshawa will make other measures available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services.

3.2 Support Person

This process will ensure that:

- if a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person both persons are permitted 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;
- City of Oshawa staff may require a 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 or safety of others on the premises; and,
- If an admission fee is to be charged for a support person, City of Oshawa staff shall ensure advance notice of applicable fees is provided.

4. Procedure:

4.1 Guide Dogs and Service Animals

City of Oshawa staff shall ensure that the person is permitted to enter the City of Oshawa premises open to the public or third parties with the animal and to keep the animal with him/her unless the guide dog or service animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises.

If a person is excluded by law from keeping their guide dog or service animal with them, City of Oshawa staff shall consult with the individual to provide other measures to enable the person to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services.

It is not necessary for staff to request documentation for verification of a guide dog or service animal if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability.

In circumstances where it is not apparent that the guide dog or service animal is used by a person for reasons relating to his or her disability, City of Oshawa staff may ask the person to provide a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

Representatives of the Corporation are required to ensure that this request is made in a format that respects the dignity and independence of the person to ensure integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities.

Additional factors to consider include:

- not all disabilities are visible;
- not all service animals wear identifying gear, such as harnesses or tags;
- a person is not to be separated from their guide dog or service animal;

- a guide dog or service animal is not to be touched;
- a guide dog or service animal is not to be fed or deliberately startled; and,
- respecting confidentiality of the person and circumstances related to his/her guide dog or service animal.

Reasonable behaviour is expected from those interacting with service animals. The owners of disruptive and aggressive service animals and those who interact with service animals in a negative way may be asked to leave the premises.

4.2 Support Persons

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, City of Oshawa staff shall permit both persons to enter the premises together and ensure the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the support person while on the premises.

If a City of Oshawa staff person feels that a reasonable health or safety concern for a person with a disability or of others on the premises may be in jeopardy, the staff person may request that a support person be present.

It may be necessary for the support person to provide consent to regulations specific to the service provided and agree to a confidentiality clause when City of Oshawa staff are discussing information concerning the person they are assisting (see next page).

If an admission fee is to be charged for a support person, City of Oshawa staff shall ensure advance notice of applicable fees is provided. A number of methods are available for the posting of notice of fees, including but not limited to, the City's website, publications and signage.

Consent for Presence of Support Person

I, _____, consent to _____
Name of Individual Consenting *Name of Support Person*

being present during my meeting with the staff of The Corporation of the City of Oshawa.

I may revoke this Consent at any time by providing such revocation to The Corporation of the City of Oshawa in writing.

SIGNED at the City of Oshawa this _____ day of _____, 20__.

The Corporation of the City of Oshawa Individual

Declaration of Confidentiality

I, _____, agree at all times to treat as confidential all
Name of Support Person

information discussed by _____ and staff of The Corporation
Name of Individual

of the City of Oshawa.

SIGNED at the City of Oshawa this _____ day of _____, 20__.

The Corporation of the City of Oshawa Individual

Notification of the Disruption of Service and Facility Access Corporate Policy and Procedure

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to establish a corporate-wide approach for the notification of the disruption of City services and facilities. The objective is to:

- ensure consistency of the notification process;
- define the notification content and reporting venues; and,
- provide documentation as required by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, (AODA) 2005, Ontario Regulation 429/07.

2. Sources

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, (AODA) 2005 – Accessibility Standard for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07), Section 5;
- Oshawa Community Strategic Plan, 2005 – Goal C: A Caring and Responsive Community – known for its community health and safety, accessibility, community cooperation and involvement, affordability and accountability to its citizens;
- City of Oshawa Customer Service Strategy – 2006 – Goal 3 – Information and Technology Access/Process Documentation and Streamlining;
- City of Oshawa Accessibility Policy; and
- The Municipal Act

3. Policy

To meet the requirements of The Accessibility Standard for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) made under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, this Policy and Procedure has been created for City of Oshawa staff, volunteers and agents.

This process will ensure that:

- public notice is provided when facilities or services are temporarily disrupted in whole or in part;
- notice of the disruption includes information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available; and,
- notice may be given by posting the information in a conspicuous place on the affected premises, by posting it on the website, or by such other method as is reasonable in the circumstances.

For the purposes of this policy, any reference to “staff” also applies to City volunteers and agents.

4. Procedure

If there is a temporary disruption in City of Oshawa facilities or services in whole or in part, the City staff member responsible for overseeing the provision of a service and/or facility, or their designate, is responsible to provide public notice in at least one of the following three methods:

- notice physically posted at the site of the disruption;
- notice on the City website; or,
- notice in local media.

Staff are encouraged to consider the potential length and location of the disruption when determining the method(s) and location(s) of notice. Due to the nature of their requirements, people with disabilities often plan transportation and other details related to their visit well in advance of attending a City facility or program. Signage strategically placed also assists people by offering alternate solutions prior to travelling to their destination (i.e. a sign posted at a cross section in advance of the obstruction allows a person to make an alternate plans rather than travelling to the barrier and then having to go back to their point of origin or making unsafe road crossings). Examples of a temporary disruption include the following but are not limited to:

- a pool closing
- a section of sidewalk or trail closure
- an elevator malfunction

Any Notice of Disruption will contain the following information:

- reason for the disruption;
- anticipated duration; and,
- alternative facilities or services.

In order to post disruption in the City's facilities or services on the City's website, the City staff person responsible for overseeing the service and/or facility, or their designate, shall:

- provide the details noted above to their Branch web representative (see intranet for staff listing);
- in the event that the Branch web representative is not available, information can be provided to a City's webmaster; and,
- the Branch web representative or webmaster will post the notice on the City's website.

Feedback Process Corporate Policy and Procedure

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to establish a corporate-wide approach for receiving and responding to feedback in the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities. The objective is to:

- clarify the methods and process for receiving and responding to feedback;
- outline the actions required if a complaint is received; and,
- provide documentation as required by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, (AODA) 2005, Ontario Regulation 429/07.

2. Sources

- *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2005 – Accessibility Standard for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07), Section 7;
- Oshawa Community Strategic Plan, 2005 – Goal C: A Caring and Responsive Community - known for its community health and safety, accessibility, community cooperation and involvement, affordability and accountability to its citizens;
- City of Oshawa Customer Service Strategy, 2006 – Goal 1: Performance Measurement – Establish Corporate Wide Reporting;
- City of Oshawa Accessibility Policy; and,
- The Municipal Act

3. Policy

To meet the requirements of The Accessibility Standard for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) made under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2005, this Policy and Procedure has been created for City of Oshawa staff, volunteers and agents.

This process will:

- identify how the City will receive and respond to feedback about the manner in which it provides goods and services. Persons with disabilities will be able to provide their feedback in person, by telephone, by mail, email or on diskette or otherwise;
- identify how information about this process is made available to the public; and,
- specify the actions that the City will take if a complaint is received.

For the purposes of this policy, any reference to “staff” also applies to City volunteers and agents.

4. Procedure

4.1 Receiving Feedback

City of Oshawa customers may submit feedback through a variety of methods including:

- telephone (905) 436-3311 or (800) 667-4292
- in Person at most City facilities
- fax (905) 436-5642
- TTY (905) 436-5627
- email service@oshawa.ca
- website www.oshawa.ca/service
- mail Service Oshawa, 50 Centre St. S., Oshawa, ON L1H 3Z7

Staff working in City facilities (other than Service Oshawa) are requested to access the feedback form at www.oshawa.ca/service and submit the feedback on behalf of the customer. Alternatively, the form may be printed and provided to the customer for manual completion. Manually completed forms should be date stamped and forwarded to Service Oshawa via inter-office mail.

Staff working outside of City facilities (e.g. Parks or Forestry) or those unable to access the internet for the form are to direct the customer to the nearest reception counter or provide Service Oshawa contact information.

If feedback is received directly by Service Oshawa staff, all pertinent information is collected and a case is created in the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software.

4.2 Responding to Feedback

When feedback is received in the mail or via feedback forms, Service Oshawa staff are to create a case in the CRM software. The Customer Service Representative (CSR) is to advise the customer that their feedback or complaint has been received and provided a case number.

Cases are reviewed by the Customer Service Coordinator or Manager who will respond to the customer directly or refer the complaint to the Director, Supervisor or Manager in the appropriate Branch. Customers will receive an initial response to any complaint within 2 business days which will include anticipated action and timeframe for full response where appropriate.

The Branch Director, Supervisor or Manager will update the case in the CRM software and/or advise Service Oshawa by phone or email of any follow up action which will be recorded in CRM software.

4.3 Public Awareness of Process

This document will be:

- printed and displayed at Service Oshawa;
- posted on the City's website (www.oshawa.ca); and,
- available in alternate formats upon request to Service Oshawa.

4.4 Actions to be taken in the Event of a Complaint

City of Oshawa staff will have many tools available to allow them to respond to a complaint:
Possible opportunities for resolving issues include:

- apologizing for any City error;
- taking corrective measures to prevent recurrence;
- using the complaint or feedback as an opportunity to coach staff;
- considering the complaint for future program enhancements; and,
- providing the customer with alternative service methods.

Mandatory Training Registration

First and Last Name: _____

Department: _____

Organization: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

By signing above and submitting this registration card, I hereby confirm my acceptance of the booklet titled "*Accessible Customer Service*" for the City of Oshawa.

Further, I have read and understand the booklet material which constitutes completion of the mandatory Accessible Customer Service training as required under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (The Act)*.

Please register my compliance with the Act.

Please remit to Human Resources/supervisor for record retention.

**Changing the way we think,
Changes the way we live.**



For more information

905-436-5636 Extension 2288

905-436-5627 (TTY)

access@oshawa.ca

www.oshawa.ca