

Intent

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07* under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and applies to the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties, not to the goods themselves.

All goods and services provided by Ontario Electronic Stewardship (OES) shall follow the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity. OES is committed to excellence in serving, and providing access to all customers including people with disabilities.

Scope

- a) This policy applies to the provision of goods and services at premises owned and operated by OES.
- b) This policy applies to employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractors who deal with the public or other third parties that act on behalf of OES, including when the provision of goods and services occurs off the premises of OES such as in: delivery/pick up services, call centers, vendors, drivers, and third party marketing/event agencies.
- c) This policy shall also apply to all persons who participate in the development of the OES's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to members of the public or third parties.

Definitions

Assistive Device – is a technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that customers bring with them such as a wheelchair, walker or a personal oxygen tank that might assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering and/or reading.

Disability – the term disability as defined by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, refers to:

- any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- a learning disability, or 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.

Guide Dog – is a highly-trained working dog that has been trained at one of the facilities listed in Ontario Regulation 58 under the *Blind Persons' Rights Act*, to provide mobility, safety and increased independence for people who are blind.

Service Animal – as reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, an animal is a service 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 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.

Service Dog – as reflected in *Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562* a dog other than a guide dog for the blind is a service dog if:

- it is readily apparent to an average person that the dog functions as a service dog for a person with a medical disability;
- or the person who requires the dog can provide on request a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires a service dog.

Support Person – as reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, 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, medical needs or access to goods and services.

General Principles

A. The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities

OES will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity by:

- ensuring that all customers receive the same value and quality;
- allowing customers with disabilities to do things in their own ways, at their own pace when accessing goods and services as long as this does not present a safety risk;
- using alternative methods when possible to ensure that customers with disabilities have access to the same services, in the same place and in a similar manner;
- taking into account individual needs when providing goods and services; and
- communicating in a manner that takes into account the customer's disability.

B. Assistive Devices

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing goods or services provided by OES.

In cases where the assistive device presents a safety concern or where accessibility might be an issue, other reasonable measures will be used to ensure the access of goods and services.

C. Guide Dogs, Service Animals and Service Dogs

A customer with a disability that is accompanied by guide dog, service animal or service dog will be allowed access to premises that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law. "No pet" policies do not apply to guide dogs, service animals and/or service dogs.

If a guide dog, service animal or service dog is excluded by law (see applicable laws below) OES will offer alternative methods to enable the person with a disability to access goods and services, when possible (for example, securing the animal in a safe location and offering the guidance of an employee).

Applicable Laws:

Dog Owners' Liability Act, Ontario: If there is a conflict between a provision of this Act or of a regulation under this or any other Act relating to banned breeds (such as pitbulls) and a provision of a by-law passed by a municipality relating to these breeds, the provision that is more restrictive in relation to controls or bans on these breeds prevails. Recognizing a Guide Dog, Service Dog and/or Service Animal:

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used by the customer for reasons relating to his or her disability, OES may request verification from the customer.

Verification may include:

- a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons related to the disability;
- a valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada; or,
- a certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school.

Care and Control of the Animal:

The customer that is accompanied by a guide dog, service dog and/or service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all time.

Allergies:

If a health and safety concern presents itself for example in the form of a severe allergy to the animal, OES will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals.

D. Support Persons

If a customer with a disability is accompanied by a support person, OES will ensure that both persons are allowed to enter the premises together and that the customer is not prevented from having access to the support person.

In situations where confidential information might be discussed, consent will be obtained from the customer, prior to any conversation where confidential information might be discussed.

E. Notice of Disruptions in Service

Service disruptions may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of OES. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services that customer's with disabilities rely on to access or use OES's goods or services, reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice. In some circumstances such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruptions, advance notice may not be possible.

When disruptions occur OES will provide notice by:

- posting notices on the RYE website;
- contacting customers with appointments;
- verbally notifying customers when they are making a reservation or appointment; or
- by any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

Notifications will Include:

In the event that a notification needs to be posted the following information will be included unless it is not readily available or known:

- goods or services that are disrupted or unavailable
- reason for the disruption
- anticipated duration
- a description of alternative services or options

F. Feedback Process

OES shall provide customers with the opportunity to provide feedback on the service provided to all customers. Customers may provide feedback via e-mail (written) and/or by contacting OES Customer Service Representatives by phone (verbally). It is OES policy that all customer concerns be addressed, including any resulting action, within a 24-48 hour period.

G. Training

Training will be provided to all OES employees, contractors, , and others who deal with the public or other third parties that act on behalf of the organization, as well as those who are involved in the development and approval of customer service policies, practices and procedures.

Revised training will be provided in the event of changes to legislation, procedures and/or practices.

Record of Training

OES HR will keep a record of training that includes the dates training was provided and the number of employees who attended the training.

H. Notice of Availability and Format of Documents

OES shall make available the *Accessibility Standard for Customer Service Policy* is available on the corporate website. Should the customer need assistance to obtain the policy, or another format provided, this will be provided.

Billing

Invoices will be made accessible to all of our customers and can be provided in the following formats: hard copy, large print or e-mail. Staff are also available to answer any questions about the content of an invoice in person, by telephone or by e-mail.

Administration

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy or its related procedures please contact:

Jonathan Spencer
Executive Director
416-380-4545 ext. 201
850 Don Mills Rd.
Suite 400
jspencer@ontarioelectronicstewardship.ca

This policy and its related procedures will be reviewed as required in the event of legislative changes.

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy

Acknowledgement & Agreement

I, (Employee Name), acknowledge that I have read and understand the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy of OES. Further, I agree to adhere to this Policy and will ensure that employees working under my direction adhere to these guiding principles. I understand that if I violate this Policy, I may face corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy

Referenced Documents:

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07
- Blind Person's Rights Act, 1990
- Dog Owners' Liability Act, Ontario
- Food Safety and Quality Act 2001, Ontario Regulation 31/05
- Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562
- Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990