

Town of Kingsville

Accessible Customer Services Standard Policy

1. PURPOSE:

The Corporation of the Town of Kingsville is committed to be responsive to the needs of all its residents and visitors. In order to meet the intent of the new Accessibility Standards of Customer Services legislated by Ontario Regulation 429/07, it must recognize the diverse needs of its residents and visitors by striving to provide services and facilities that are accessible to all people. As a provider of goods and services, the Town is committed to ensuring its goods and services are provided in an accessible manner.

The Town will promote accessibility through the development of policies, procedures and practices and by ensuring it considers people with disabilities. To do this it will make every effort to address **integration, independence, dignity and equal opportunity** through the corporate policies, procedures and practices.

2. PRINCIPLES:

Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure the following:

- 2.1 that goods and services be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- 2.2 the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities, and all others will be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or permanently, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use and/or benefit from the goods and services.
- 2.3 persons with disabilities will be given an opportunity – equal to that given to others – to obtain, use and benefit from the goods and services.

3. DEFINITIONS:

3.1 'Disability'

For the purpose of this policy 'disability' is defined according to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 as:

- (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 coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- (b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental 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.

3.2 'Kingsville Accessibility Advisory Committee'

For the purposes of this policy the 'Kingsville Accessibility Advisory Committee' is defined as a Committee of the Council.

3.2 'service animal'

For the purpose of this policy, a 'service animal' is defined as either:

- (i) A 'guide dog' for a person with a disability; or

For the purpose of this policy, an animal is a 'service animal' for a person with a disability:

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

3.3 'support person'

For the purpose of this policy, a 'support person' is defined as another person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help him or her with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods and services.

4. SCOPE:

This policy applies to:

- 4.1 all departments, divisions, or sections within the Town;
- 4.2 all employees, unionized and non-unionized;
- 4.3 all volunteers who interact with the public on the Towns' behalf; and
- 4.4 all third-party contractors who interact with the public on the Towns' behalf.

5. PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES:

5.1 Procedures and practices will strive to reflect or achieve the following:

- (i) communications will be considered in a manner that takes into consideration a persons' disability;
- (ii) staff, volunteers and third-party contractors will receive appropriate training;

- (iii) persons with disabilities accompanied by a 'guide dog' or 'service animal' will be permitted in those areas of the premises owned or operated by the Town that are typically open to the public unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law;
- (iv) persons with disabilities accompanied by a 'support person' will be permitted to be accompanied by that 'support person' in premises normally open to the public;
- (v) if any amount is payable by a person for admission to the premises in connection with a person's presence at the premises, the Town will ensure that notice is given in advance about the amount, if any, payable in respect to the support person;
- (vi) notice will be provided when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access the Town are temporarily disrupted;
- (vii) the Town will establish a feedback process to allow people to provide feedback on how we are providing services to persons with disabilities; and
- (viii) the Town will allow persons with disabilities to use their own personal assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from the services offered by the Town.

FEEDBACK PROCESS:

Should a member of the public wish to make a complaint regarding the goods and services they have received:

- 6.1 the member of the public with the complaint or concern should have a discussion with the staff member at the Town involved in the situation;
- 6.2 should the discussion not resolve the complaint or the member of the public is uncomfortable discussing the issue with the staff member, the staff member will provide the member of the public with the contact information for the department manager;
- 6.3 the complaint should be forwarded to the manager responsible for the department;
- 6.4 the department manager will attempt to resolve the complaint in a timely manner and the 'Kingsville Accessibility Advisory Committee' will be informed and assist if required;
- 6.5 the member of the public will be contacted once a resolution has been reached;
- 6.6 should a member of the public wish to provide the Town with a suggestion on how to improve services:
 - (i) the member of the public will inform a staff member of the suggestion;
 - (ii) the staff member will inform the department manager and the 'Kingsville Accessibility Advisory Committee' of the suggestion.

7. SERVICE DISRUPTION:

- 7.1 If, in order to obtain, use or benefit from a provider's goods and services, persons with disabilities usually use particular facilities or services of the provider and if there is a temporary disruption in those facilities or services in whole or in part, the Town shall give notice of the disruption to the public.
- 7.2 Notice of the disruption must include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, which are available.
- 7.3 Notice will be given by posting the information at a conspicuous place on premises owned and operated by the Town, as well as by posting it on the Town website.
- 7.4 If the Town website should expect temporary service disruption, advance notice where possible, in keeping with the conditions of the service disruption section of this policy, shall be provided on the website.
- 7.5 Efforts will be made to have audio messages explaining the disruption at the appropriate contact numbers.

8. FORMAT OF DOCUMENTS:

- 8.1 Should the Town be required to give a copy of a document to a person with a disability, the Town shall give the person the document, or the information contained in the document, in a format that takes into account the persons' disability.
- 8.2 Material printed in-house and publications produced on behalf of the Town should contain a note indicating "alternate formats are available upon request" and include relevant contact information.
- 8.3 The Town and the person with a disability will try to agree upon the format to be used for the document or information, subject to feasibility requirements of this policy.
- 8.4 Feasibility will be determined based upon the cost in relation to size of document and time associated with processing document requests.
- 8.5 The time frame attached to the conversion process varies depending on the media chosen, the size, complexity, quality of source documents and number of documents to be converted. Documents shall be returned in a timely manner depending on the factors previously noted.
- 8.6 Conversion shall be processed in-house wherever possible. When a member of the public requests a piece of Town documentation in a multiple format, the department of origin shall be responsible for the cost of conversion, materials and distribution, not the public requestor.
- 8.7 In-house printing, where possible, should adhere to the CNIB's Clear Print Standards.

9. TRAINING:

- 9.1 The Town shall ensure that the following persons receive training about the provision of its goods and services to persons with disabilities:
- (a) every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Town, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise; and
 - (b) every person who participates in developing the Town's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to members of the public or other third parties.
- 9.2 This training will include a review of the purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of this policy and instruction about the following matters:
- (a) how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;
 - (b) how to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other 'service animal' or the assistance of a 'support person';
 - (c) how to use equipment or devices available on the provider's premises or otherwise provided by the provider that may help with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability;
 - (iv) what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing the provider's goods or services;
 - (v) the Town will log and maintain records which will record the details of the training provided, as well as the name of the person, location and date the training was completed;
 - (vi) the Town will customize the training going forward, based on the actual experiences and usage of the person with a disability in the Town of Kingsville owned and operated facilities.

10. ASSISTIVE DEVICES:

- 10.1 The Town will allow persons with disabilities to use their own personal assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from the services offered by the Town.
- 10.2 Should a person with a disability be unable to access the Town's services through the use of their own personal assistive device, the Town will ensure the following measures:
- (a) determine if service is inaccessible, based upon individual requirements;
 - (b) assess service delivery and potential service options to meet the needs of the individual; and

- (c) **notify the person with a disability of alternative service and how he or she can access the service, temporarily or on a permanent basis.**