

AODA Policy

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

Statement of Commitment

Driverseat Owen Sound is committed to exceeding its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code respecting non-discrimination. Driverseat Owen Sound 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 people with disabilities under any other laws. Driverseat Owen Sound is committed to complying with both the Ontario Human Rights Code and the AODA. Driverseat Owen Sound is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities. Our accessible customer service policies are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

Employment

Driverseat Owen Sound is an equal opportunity employer. All aspects of our employment including the decision to hire, promote, discipline, or discharge, will be based on merit, competence, performance, and business needs. Driverseat Owen Sound welcomes and encourages applications from people with disabilities. We consult with applicants to provide appropriate accommodations for the selection process. Applicants are encouraged to request any appropriate accommodations prior to starting their employment.

Communication

We will work with individuals to determine what method of communication works for them. We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. This may include, but is not limited to:

- ❑ Use of actions and etiquette which are considered appropriate when interacting with people with disabilities is based primarily on respect and courtesy.
- ❑ Be prepared to repeat what you say, orally or in writing.

- ❑ If you are in a public area with many distractions, consider moving to a quiet or private location.
- ❑ Be patient, flexible and supportive. Take time to understand the individual and make sure the individual understands you.
- ❑ Offer assistance completing forms or understanding written instructions and provide extra time for decision-making. Wait for the individual to accept the offer of assistance; do not "over-assist" or be patronizing.
- ❑ State clearly who you are; speak in a normal tone of voice.
- ❑ If you are offering a seat, gently place the individual's hand on the back or arm of the chair so that the person can locate the seat if they are visually impaired.
- ❑ Be descriptive when giving directions; verbally give the person information that is visually obvious to individuals who can see. For example, if you are approaching steps, mention how many steps.
- ❑ Concentrate on what the individual is saying.
- ❑ Try to ask questions which require only short answers or a nod of the head.
- ❑ Look directly at the individual, face the light, speak clearly, in a normal tone of voice, and keep your hands away from your face. Use short, simple sentences.
- ❑ Do not lean on a wheelchair or any other assistive device.
- ❑ Offer assistance if the individual appears to be having difficulty opening a door.
- ❑ If you telephone the individual, allow the phone to ring longer than usual to allow extra time for the person to reach the telephone.
- ❑ Treat adults as adults. Address people who have disabilities by their first names only when extending the same familiarity to all others.

Service Animals

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public.

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.

Our staff is committed to follow below guidelines when encountering the specially bred and trained dogs:

- ❑ Don't touch, pet, talk to, feed or otherwise distract the dog while he/she is wearing a harness.
- ❑ Don't attempt to grab or steer the person while the dog is guiding, do not attempt to hold the dog's harness or give the dog commands.
- ❑ If you would like to pet the guide dog, ask the guide dog user first.
- ❑ Don't walk on the dog's left side.

Support Persons

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises. We will not charge any additional fee/fare for the support persons.

Assistive Devices

- ❑ People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our services or facilities.
- ❑ In cases where the assistive device presents unavoidable errors, other measures (considering the right way to assist) will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access our services or facilities.
- ❑ We will ensure that our staff and chauffeurs are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that we may provide for the customers with disabilities while accessing our services or facilities.
 - ❑ If necessary training sessions will be conducted to familiarize the staff and chauffeurs with the new assistive devices, and how to handle customers using such devices. The training can be conducted during group meetings or using online platforms (Sparkwork)

Design of Public Spaces

Driverseat Owen Sound provides accessible parking for people with disabilities.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities, Driverseat Owen Sound will make reasonable efforts to notify customers promptly. We will clearly explain the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Training

Driverseat Owen Sound. provides accessible customer service training to:

- all employees (staff, interns, chauffeurs)

Staff will be trained on accessible customer service within two weeks after being hired.

Training will include:

- purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard
- Driverseat Owen Sound's policies related to the customer service standard
- how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- how to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Driverseat's services or facilities

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

Feedback Process

Driverseat Owen Sound. welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Customer feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns.

Customers will be notified of how to provide feedback in the following ways:

- Email

- Phone
- In person
- Written feedback

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

Feedback will be directed to <Team Individual Name and Title> for further investigation and communication.

Customers can expect to hear back in 3 business days.

Driverseat Owen Sound. will make sure our feedback process is accessible to people with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication support, on request.

Removal and Prevention of Barriers

Known Barriers

Barriers that are known are identified as part of the accessibility plan update process and, where appropriate, initiatives are included in the plan to address the same.

Ex. We included step ladders in our vehicles to assist the customers with disabilities get into the vehicle. We have hired some chauffeurs with PSW experience who are trained and aware about various disabilities and how to assist such customers.

New or Unknown Barriers

In the event that a barrier that has not been included in our Accessibility Plan is brought to the attention of Driverseat Owen Sound, it is assessed in terms of steps required to eliminate the barrier and the resources required for the same. In many cases, the barrier is addressed immediately. These are customized solutions in order to accommodate the person with disabilities.

Ex- We made arrangements for accessible parking spaces when there was a requirement. We used different ways of conducting office meetings to accommodate everyone in the office. We try to allocate experienced chauffeurs to provide service to the person with disabilities.

Our management team is committed to take all reasonable efforts to access technical barriers requiring attention, it is scheduled for inclusion in the next Accessibility Plan update

Modifications to this or other policies

Any policies of Driverseat Owen Sound that do not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

<https://www.grt.ca/en/accessibility.aspx>

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/accessibility-in-ontario>

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/accessibility-rules-businesses-and-non-profits>

*** <https://www.ontario.ca/page/how-make-customer-service-accessible>

*** [https://www.ontario.ca/page/accessible-customer-service-policy-template#section-](https://www.ontario.ca/page/accessible-customer-service-policy-template#section-1)

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<https://www.aoda.ca/customer-care-standard/#purpose>

<https://www.disabled-world.com/communication/>