

Accessible Customer Service Procedure

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Procedure Number: MS-ACC-001-001 **Parent Policy:** MS-ACC-001

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References and Related Documents

[Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2011](#)

[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#)

[Accessibility Standards for Customer Service-Ontario Regulation 429/07](#)

[Ontario Human Rights Code](#)

[Ontario Regulation 31/05 Food Safety and Quality Act 2001](#)

[Dog Owner's Liability Act](#)

[Ontario Regulation 562 under Health Protection and Promotion Act](#)

[Integrated Accessibility Standard-Ontario Regulation 191/11](#)

[Grey County 2011 Accessibility Plan with Appendices](#)

[MS-ACC-001-001 Accessibility Procedure](#)

Other Accessibility Standards as enacted

Forms

[Schedule A - Feedback Form](#)

Purpose

This procedure addresses the accessibility requirements of Ontario Regulation 429/07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

Reasonable efforts shall be made to provide all persons equal opportunity to obtain, use and benefit from County goods and services. To ensure that goods and services are provided in a manner and format that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities, the provision of such goods and services shall be:

- part of standard business operations, whenever possible,

- accessible through the use of assistive devices, service animals and support persons unless prohibited by law or for reasons of health and safety,
- reinforced through training of personnel on accessibility requirements; provision of service disruption notification, when required; and, access to a feedback process.

Scope

This procedure covers the provision of municipal goods and services provided by Council and County employees as well as by volunteers, agents or contractors (personnel) representing or performing any function on behalf of the County.

Procedures

The County shall recognize and accommodate persons requiring the use of assistive devices, service animals and support persons to access goods and services in accordance with applicable legislation, policy and procedures.

Assistive Devices

The use of assistive devices by individuals as required, in accessing goods and/or services provided by the County is recognized unless otherwise prohibited due to health and safety or privacy issues. Where possible, the County shall make assistive devices available in the form of lifts, wheelchairs, audio and visual enhancements, etc.)

Should a person with a disability be unable to access the County's services through the use of their own personal assistive device, the County will ensure the following measures:

- Determine if service is accessible, based upon individual requirements;
- Assess service delivery and potential service options to meet the needs of the individual;
- Notify the person with a disability of alternative service and how they can access the service, temporarily or on a permanent basis.

Service Animals

The accompaniment of service animals on areas that are open to the public is permitted and the County will ensure that the person is permitted to keep the animal with him or her unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law.

If a service animal is excluded by law from the premises, the provider of goods or services shall ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the provider's goods or services.

It is noted that the care and control of all service animals is the sole responsibility of the owner at all times while accessing and receiving county services.

Support Persons

The need for a support person to support and assist an individual with a disability when accessing goods and services provided by the County is recognized. The County of Grey reserves the right to request the person with a disability be accompanied by a support person, in the event that it is considered necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with a disability or others on the premises.

The County of Grey shall waive admission fees for support persons who accompany a person with a disability, into facilities where admission is charged or at special events where admission fees apply.

- (a) Member of public should notify a staff member regarding the presence of the support person.
- (b) Admission fees will be waived for the support person.
- (c) If there is confidential information to be disclosed, consent must be received from the person with the disability.

Training

The County shall provide training to all staff, volunteers, agents/contractors and any other individuals who interact with the public or other third parties on behalf of the County. Training shall be commensurate with the level of public contact and shall include:

- The purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07
- 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
- How to use assistive devices, if applicable, which may be available at County facilities (e.g.: TTY, Bell Relay, wheelchairs etc.)
- Instruction if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing the County's goods and services

Training shall be provided on an as needed basis (for example training on the use of assistive equipment shall be upon hire or the first day of employment/use; whereas

customer service training shall be provided in accordance with the County's Human Resource training schedule).

Training shall be provided in a timely manner and on an ongoing basis to meet staff needs and to ensure compliance with applicable legislation.

County policies and procedures are available on the County's website. The appropriate policy and procedures shall be reviewed as part of the training program.

The County shall keep records of the training provided in accordance with Ontario Regulation 429/07.

Service Disruption (Regular and Temporary)

If, in order to obtain, use or benefit from a provider's goods or services, persons with disabilities usually use particular facilities or services of the provider (for example, elevators) and if there is a regular or temporary disruption in those facilities or services in whole or in part, the County shall give notice of the disruption to the public.

- a) 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, that are available.
- b) Notice will be given by posting the information at a conspicuous place on premises owned or operated by the provider of goods or services, as well as by posting it on the County of Grey website.
- c) If the County of Grey Website should expect a temporary service disruption, advance notice where possible, keeping with the conditions of the service disruption section of this policy, shall be provided on the website.

Feedback Process

The County shall maintain a feedback form to enable members of the public to comment on the provision of goods and services to people with disabilities. Such feedback shall be received in any form (i.e. in person, by telephone (TTY), in writing, fax or in electronic format, including email), and such comments shall be logged by the County.

All questions and concerns received shall be acknowledged within a maximum of two days from the date of receipt, response time to such submissions shall be dependant on the complexity of the issue, but shall not exceed 15 business days, unless there are extenuating circumstances that have been communicated to the submitter.

Responsibilities

All Departments are responsible for:

- Submitting completed feedback form to the Clerk's Department
- Providing documents in a suitable format upon request by a person with a disability
- Ensuring compliance with the Standards of Accessible Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07
- Notifying the Human Resources Department of any additional training requirements.
- Budgeting for accessibility requirements
- Communicating and coordinating, when applicable, with a person with a disability regarding the use of a support person.
- Communicating and coordinating, when applicable, with a person with a disability regarding services animals.
- Providing notification of a service disruption to those persons that have registered with the County.

User (Person with a disability) is responsible for:

- Supervising and keeping service animals in control when used to access the County's goods and services.
- Providing verification or license of service animal certification
- Providing the County with a contact name and information should service disruption notification be required

Human Resources Department is responsible for:

- The provision of Accessibility Training in accordance with the relevant policies and procedures
- Maintaining records for employee training

Clerk's Department is responsible for:

- Submitting legislated reports as required
- Maintaining accessibility feedback forms and reporting annually to Corporate Services Committee

Definitions

Accessible

Capable of being entered or reached, approachable; easy to get at; capable of being influenced; obtainable; easy to understand or appreciate.

Disability (Ontario Human Rights Code definition)

- 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, induces diabetes, mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impediment, hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a dog guide or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- a condition of mental impairment of 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;
- an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety Insurance Act, 1997.

Service Animal

- A “guide dog,” as defined in section 1 of the *Blind Persons Rights’ Act*; or
- A “service animal” for a person with a disability. For the purpose of this policy, 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 the 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.

Support Person

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 service.