

# City of Brockville

## Accessible Customer Service

### Index Number P124

Responsible Authority: Clerk  
Executive Sponsor: City Manager  
Approval Authority: City of Brockville Council  
Date First Approved: July 28, 2009  
Date Last Reviewed: August 5, 2015

### **Purpose**

To ensure that every person who deals with the public or other third parties who may deal with the public on our behalf receives training on how to provide customer service to people with disabilities.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all regular full time staff, seasonal and temporary employees and all students or part time employees who are employed by the City of Brockville and contractors.

### **Policy**

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, is a law passed by the Government of Ontario to allow for the development of specific standards of accessibility to move organizations in Ontario forward on accessibility. The first of several standards, Customer Service Ontario Regulation 429/07 applies to all organizations that provide goods or service to the public or other organizations in Ontario and have at least one employee and designated public sector organizations.

The Standard sets timelines for compliance by designated public sector organizations by January 1, 2010 and organizations in the private sector, including non-profit by January 1, 2012.

To meet compliance with the Accessible Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429-07, under the above noted Act, the City of Brockville must ensure that every person who deals with the public or other third parties who may deal with the public on our behalf receives training on how to provide customer service to people with disabilities by January 1, 2010.

## **Our Commitment**

The City of Brockville strives at all times to provide its goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of all people. The City of Brockville is committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our goods and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other customers.

## **Exclusion**

This Accessibility Customer Service Policy shall not apply during any period where the Mayor, or the Mayor's designate has declared a "State of Emergency" as defined under the Emergency Management Act.

## **Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities**

The City of Brockville will provide goods and services to people with disabilities, with particular consideration to the following areas:

### **Communication**

The City of Brockville will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. Staff who interacts with customers will be trained on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

The City of Brockville is committed to providing fully accessible telephone service to our customers. Staff will be trained to communicate with customers over the telephone in clear and plain language, to speak clearly and slowly and to tailor their responses as much as possible in support of the individual.

The City of Brockville will offer to communicate with customers by other means, including Bell Canada Relay Service or email, if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

### **Assistive Devices**

The City of Brockville is committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services. Staff will be trained and become familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods or services.

The City of Brockville will also ensure that staffs know how to use the assistive devices which are available on our premises, including electronic door openers, elevators and lifts.

## **Correspondence, invoices and other documentation**

The City of Brockville is committed to providing accessible information to all of our customers.

For this reason, correspondence, invoices and other documentation will be provided in large print or by email, upon request.

The City of Brockville may provide a document, or information contained in a document, in a format that takes into account the person's disability. The City of Brockville and the person with a disability may agree upon the format to be used for the document or information.

Any questions customers may have about the content of a document will be answered in person, by telephone or email.

## **The Use of Service Animals and Support Persons**

### **Service Animals**

The City of Brockville is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal, in the areas of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties. All staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public will be properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability:

- i. if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
- ii. 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**

The City of Brockville is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter the City of Brockville's buildings with his or her support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person, be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on City premises.

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 or with access to goods or services.

If admission to an event is permitted and fees are payable to the City of Brockville, the Support Person is permitted to attend at the event at their own cost.

If admission to an event is permitted and fees are payable to a third party, the Support Person is permitted to attend the event at their own cost.

The Brockville Transit System permits Support Persons to ride without charge.

Customers will be informed of this policy by a notice that will be posted at each building and on the City of Brockville's website.

## **Training**

The City of Brockville will provide training to:

- Every person who participates in developing the policy, practices and procedures under Ontario Regulation 429/07, Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
- Every person who deals with the public on behalf of the City of Brockville by January 1, 2010, including:
  - Members of Council;
  - Employees;
  - Members of boards and committees of Council;
  - Agents;
  - Volunteers;
  - 3rd parties
  - New employees, volunteers, management, etc. shall receive training as soon as "practicable", after commencing duties.
  - agents working on various projects for the municipality and who have been approved by successful tender shall be responsible for providing their own training to meet the requirements of Ontario Regulation 429/07

### **Training will include the following:**

- The purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of 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
- How to use the automatic door openers, elevators and lifts at the City of Brockville's premises
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing the City of Brockville's goods and services

- The City of Brockville’s policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard.

Staff will be trained on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way goods and services are provided to people with disabilities. Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

### **Training Records**

Training records shall be kept, including the dates when the training is provided, number of individuals to whom the training was provided and the signature of all those individuals trained on a particular date.

### **Feedback Process**

The ultimate goal of the City of Brockville is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving all people, including those with disabilities. Comments regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way the City of Brockville provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made by using a feedback form, by mail, email, or verbally. All feedback should be directed to the Municipal Clerk. Customers can expect a response within thirty (30) days.

### **Modifications to This or Other Policies**

The City of Brockville is committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities.

Any policy of the City of Brockville that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

Staff will be trained on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way goods and services are provided to people with disabilities. Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

### **Notice of Disruption in Service**

The City of Brockville will provide customers with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities.

This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Notice may be given by posting the information at a conspicuous place on premises owned or operated by the City of Brockville, by posting it on the City of Brockville's website or by such other method as is reasonable in the circumstances.

## **Questions about This Policy**

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to customers with disabilities.

If anyone has a question about this policy, or if the purpose of this policy is not understood, inquiries should be referred to the Accessibility Coordinator for the City of Brockville.

## **Related Materials**

- The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- Customer Service Ontario Regulation 429/07
- Accessible Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429-07

## **Definitions**

### **Disability**

Per the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, Section 2. In this Act, "disability" means,

- 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, muteness or speech impediment, or 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; Canadian Standards Association marks confirm that a product has been tested and has met the applicable standards for safety and performance as outlined by American National Standards Institute, Underwriters

Laboratories, Canadian Standards Association, National Sanitation Foundation and more.

### **Accessibility standards**

The law has set standards that help people with disabilities participate fully in their communities.

Ontario now has mandatory accessibility standards in 5 areas of daily life:

- Customer service
- Employment
- Information and communications
- Transportation
- Design of public spaces

### **Regulatory bodies and authorities having jurisdiction:**

- Ministry of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure
- Accessibility Standards Advisory Council