



Accessible Customer Service Standards Policy

Policy Manual Section: Municipal Services – General

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Authority: 8952/09

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Department Responsible: Council Services

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Purpose:

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) was passed by the Ontario legislature with the goal of creating standards to improve accessibility across the province. The AODA allows the government to develop specific standards of accessibility designed to make Ontario more accessible. The first specific standard to be developed is the Accessible Customer Service Standard that provides for service delivery in a way that preserves the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.

Policy Statement:

The Town of LaSalle is committed to recognizing the diverse needs of its residents and customers by striving to provide services that are accessible to all persons we serve.

The Town will promote accessible customer service through the development of policies, procedures and practices that considers persons with disabilities. The guiding principles are dignity, independence, equal opportunity, respect and integration.

Scope:

The policy applies to all employees and departments and all volunteers, contractors and agents who interact with the public on behalf of the Town.



Policy:

Definitions:

Assistive Device

A device used to assist persons with disabilities in carrying out activities or in accessing the services of persons or organizations covered by the Customer Service Standard.

Disability

- 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 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;
- 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.

Service Animal

Any animal used by a person with a disability for reasons relating to the disability where it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or where the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that he or she requires the animal for reasons relating to his or her Disability; or 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.

Support Person

A person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to assist him or her with communication, mobility, personal care, or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

Procedures and Practices



The Town of LaSalle will use reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles:

- The Town's goods and services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- The provision of the Town's goods and services to persons with disabilities are integrated with those provided to persons who do not have disabilities unless an alternative measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Town's goods or services.
- Persons with disabilities are given an opportunity equal to that of persons without disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from the Town's goods and services.
- When communicating with a person with a disability, the Town will do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.
- The Town is aware that the operation of its services and facilities is important to the public. However, temporary disruptions in the Town's services and facilities may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the Town's control or knowledge.
- The Town will make reasonable effort to provide notice of the disruption to the public, including information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that may be available. The Town will make reasonable effort to provide prior notice of planned disruption if possible, recognizing that in some circumstances such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruption, advance notice will not be possible. In such cases, the Town will provide notice as soon as possible.
- When temporary disruptions occur to the Town's services or facilities, the Town will provide notice by posting the information in visible places, or on the Town's website (lasalle.ca), or by any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances as soon as reasonably possible i.e. by phone or in writing.
- A person with a disability may provide their own assistive device for the purpose of obtaining, using and benefiting from the Town's goods and services. Exceptions may occur in situations where the Town has determined that the assistive device may pose a risk to the health and safety of a person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises. In these situations and others, the Town may offer a person with a disability other reasonable



measures to assist him or her in obtaining, using and benefiting from the Town's goods and services, where the Town has such other measures available. It should be noted that it is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that his or her assistive device is operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

- Persons with a disability may enter premises owned and operated, or operated, by the Town accompanied by a service animal and keep the animal with them if the public has access to such premises and the animal is not otherwise excluded by law. If a service animal is excluded by law, the Town will ensure that alternate means are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Town's goods and services.

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, the Town may ask the person with a disability for a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to his or her disability. The Town may also, or instead, ask for 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.

It should be noted that it is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that his or her service animal is kept in control at all times. When a service animal is unruly or disruptive (jumping on people, biting or other harmful behavior) the person with a disability may be requested to remove the animal from the area or be refused access to goods or services. In the event this happens, the Town may offer a person with a disability other reasonable measures to assist him or her in obtaining, using or benefiting from the Town's goods and services, where the Town has such other measures available.

- A person with a disability may enter premises owned and operated, or operated, by the Town with a support person and have access to the support person while on the premises. The Town may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on Town premises in situations where it is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises. Admission fees will only be charged to the person with a disability and not the support person.

Feedback

The Town of LaSalle is committed to providing high quality goods and services to all members of the public it serves. Feedback from the public is welcomed as it may identify areas that require change and encourage continuous service improvements.



Feedback from a member of the public about the delivery of goods and services to persons with disabilities may be given by telephone, in person, in writing, in electronic format or through other methods.

Information about the feedback process will be readily available to the public and notice of the process will be posted on the Town's website (lasalle.ca) and/or in other appropriate locations.

Training

The Town will ensure that all persons to whom this policy applies receive training as required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. The amount and format of training given will be tailored to suit each person's interactions with the public and his or her involvement in the development of policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services.

The content of the training will include:

- A review of the purposes of the AODA.
- The requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07).
- Instruction on the Town's policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities.
- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.
- What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the Town's goods and services.
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or who require the assistance of a support person or service animal.
- Information about the equipment or devices available on the Town's premises that may help with the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities.
- The Town will keep records of the training, including the date on which training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it is provided. The names of individuals trained will be recorded for training administration purposes, subject



of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (“MFIPPA”).

Availability and Format of Documents

When providing a document to a person with a disability, the Town will provide the document, or the information contained in the document, in a format that takes the person’s disability into account. The time frame for providing information in an alternative format will vary depending on the media chosen, document size and complexity while all attempts will be made to provide same in a reasonable time frame. Any costs will be borne by the Town.

Notice of the Availability of Documents

Notice of the availability of all documents required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service will be posted on the Town’s website, and available through the Clerk’s Office.

Responsibilities:

Council Services is responsible for this document.

Policy Review:

This policy will be periodically reviewed and updated as required. This policy must be reviewed by the stated review date and approved by the responsible department.

References and Related Documents:

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
Policy #138

Attachments:

None.