

TOWNSHIP OF LAKE OF BAYS PROCEDURE MANUAL			
Chapter:	Human Resources	Index No.	HR-9.1
Section:	Accessibility	Effective Date:	Jan 1/10
Subject:	Accessibility Standards for Customer Service	Revision Date:	Jan 1/18
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SCHEDULE "A"
of By-law 09-75

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY

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1 PURPOSE:

- 1.01 Our commitment in filling our mission is to strive at all times to provide goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our goods and services and allowing them to benefit from the same service, in the same place and in a similar way as other customers.

2 POLICY:

- 2.01 The Corporation of the Township of Lake of Bays shall use reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles:
- a) The goods or services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;
 - b) The provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities, and others, will be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services;
 - c) Persons with disabilities will be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods or services;
 - d) Persons with disabilities may use assistive devices and/or support persons in the access of goods and services;
 - e) That the Corporation of the Township of Lake of Bays employees when communicating with a person with a disability shall do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

2.02 Definitions

“Accessibility Coordinator” shall mean the person appointed by Council as Accessibility Coordinator for the Township of Lake of Bays.

“Assistive Devices” shall mean an auxiliary aid such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids (i.e. canes, crutches, wheelchairs, or hearing aids).

“Accessible Formats and communication supports” means formats that are an alternative to standard print and are accessible to persons with disabilities. Accessible formats include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio, and electronic formats, and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

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“Disabilities” shall mean the same as definition of disability found in the Ontario Human Rights Code.

“Employees” shall mean every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Township of Lake of Bays, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise.

“Persons with Disabilities” shall mean those individuals that are afflicted with a disability as designated under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

“Service Animals” shall mean any animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability.

“Support Persons” shall mean any person whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member, or friend to who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communications, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

2.03 EXCLUSIONS

This Accessibility Customer Service Standards Policy shall not apply during any period where Council has declared a “State of Emergency” as defined under the Emergency Management Act.

2.04 DOCUMENTATION

The Township of Lake of Bays shall upon request, give a copy of the policies, practices and procedures required under Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service to any person.

2.05 PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

To implement this policy, management shall

- a) Establish practices and procedures;
- b) Evaluate practices and procedures; and
- c) Revise practices and procedures as required.

2.06 NON-COMPLIANCE

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

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2.07 REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

The Accessibility Coordinator and Accessibility Working Group shall be responsible for the review process and any subsequent amendments to this policy document. Review and amendments shall take place within the first year of each term of Council.

2.08 BEST PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

Accessible Customer Service follows four basic principles:

- a) Dignity
- b) Independence
- c) Integration
- d) Equal Opportunity

What can I do to help people with disabilities access our services?

- e) Ask how you can help
- f) Offer a variety of methods of communication
- g) Understand the nature and scope of the service you offer

Upon request, the Township of Lake of Bays will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs due to a disability.

The Township of Lake of Bays will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

The Township of the Lake of Bays will also notify the public about availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

2.09 FEEDBACK

Feedback from our customers gives the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Lake of Bays opportunities to learn and improve. The municipality recognizes that the right of our customers to make a complaint, compliment, or make suggestions on ways to improve our services.

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To assist the Township of Lake of Bays in ensuring that the delivery of goods and service to those with disabilities is provided in an effective and timely manner, the customer is invited to provide their feedback as follows:

In writing, in person, e-mail, or telephone, addressed to:

Carrie Sykes
Accessibility Coordinator
Township of Lake of Bays
1012 Dwight Beach Road
Dwight, ON P0A 1H0
Phone: (705) 635-2272, ext 236
Fax: (705) 635-2132
E-mail: csykes@lakeofbays.on.ca

The Accessibility Coordinator will respond either in writing, in person, e-mail or by telephone acknowledging receipt of feedback and will set out the action to be taken in response to any feedback.

2.10 SERVICE ANIMALS, SUPPORT PERSON(S)

Service animals, such as guide dogs, offer independence and security to many people with various disabilities. Some laws generally prohibit animals in certain areas – such a food preparation areas; however service animals are permitted in most public situations.

- a) Every employee shall allow persons with disabilities to be accompanied by their service animals unless the animal is excluded by law. Where an animal is excluded by law from the premises, the reason why the animal is excluded shall be explained to the persons with a disability. Other reasonable arrangements to provide goods and services shall be explored with the assistance of the person with a disability.
- b) When a service animal is unruly or disruptive (jumping on people, biting, or other harmful behavior) other reasonable arrangements to provide goods or services shall be explored with the assistance of the person with a disability. If a solution cannot be found an employee may ask the persons with disability to remove the animal from the area or refuse access to goods or services.

Support people assist people with disabilities in a variety of ways, by assisting with communication such as an intervener sign language interpreter, or as a Personal Support Worker providing physical

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assistance. A support person may also be a friend or relative that will assist and support the customer.

- a) Persons with disabilities may be accompanied by their support person while accessing goods and/or services. If confidential information is to be discussed a confidentiality statement may be required to be completed by the support person and permission given by the customer.
- b) In the event that admission fees are charged, advance notice concerning what admission, if any, would be charged to a support person shall be posted in a conspicuous place.

2.11 SERVICE DISRUPTION – NOTICE

It is possible that from time to time there will be disruptions in service, such as an entrance way that is under repair, renovations that limit access to an area, or technology that is temporarily unavailable. If a disruption in service is planned, and expected, it is important to provide reasonable notice.

People with disabilities may often go to a lot of trouble to access services, such as booking transit or arranging a ride. By providing notice, you can save that person an unnecessary trip.

Notice will be provided on the website, over the phone, or in writing.

2.12 UNEXPECTED DISRUPTION IN SERVICE – NOTICE

In the event of an unexpected disruption in service, notice may be provided in a variety of ways and will be done as quickly as possible.

In the event of a service disruption, alternative methods of service may be considered and those impacted by service interruption shall be informed of any alternative methods.

2.13 TRAINING

- a) **Accessibility Standards for Customer Service training is required for the following:**

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- i) Every person who participates in developing the policy, practices and procedures under Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.
- ii) Every person who deals with the public on behalf of the Township of Lake of Bays, including 3rd parties (i.e. employees, agents, volunteers, management).
- iii) Current employees, agents, volunteers, management, etc., shall receive training by January 1st, 2010.
- iv) New employees, agents, volunteers, management, etc. shall receive training as soon as “practicable”, after being assigned.
- v) Ongoing training on changes to policies, procedures and new equipment shall be provided.

b) Accessibility Standards for Customer Service training must cover the following:

- i) Review of the purposes of the AODA and requirements of the customer service standard;
- ii) Instruction on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
- iii) Instruction on how to interact with people with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of service animals or a support person;
- iv) Instruction on how to use equipment or devices available at your premises or that you provide otherwise, that may help people with disabilities access your services, such as elevators, lifts, accessible interactive kiosks or other technology; and
- v) Instruction on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing your services.

2.14 TRAINING RECORDS

The Township of Lake of Bays will maintain accurate records of training delivered to staff and volunteers and make these records available for inspection as may be required.

2.15 PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

- a) Physical disabilities include a range of functional limitations from minor difficulties in moving or coordinating one part of the body, through muscle weakness, tremors, and paralysis. Physical disabilities can be congenital such as Muscular Dystrophy; or acquired, such as tendonitis. A physical disability may affect an individual’s ability to:

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- i) Perform manual tasks such as holding a pen, turning a key or gripping a door knob
- ii) Move around independently
- iii) Control the speed or coordination of movements
- iv) Reach, pull, push or manipulate objects
- v) Have strength or endurance

b) Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:

There are many types and degrees of physical disabilities, and not all require a wheelchair. It may be difficult to identify a person with a physical disability.

Here are some tips on serving customers who have physical disabilities:

- i) Speak normally and directly to your customer. Don't speak to someone who is with them.
- ii) People with physical disabilities often have their own way of doing things. Ask before you help.
- iii) Wheelchairs and other mobility devices are part of a person's personal space, don't touch, move or lean on them. If possible put yourself at their eye level.
- iv) Provide your customer information about accessible features of the immediate environment (automatic doors, accessible washrooms, etc.)
- v) Keep ramps and corridors free of clutter.
- vi) If a counter is too high or wide, step around it to provide service.
- vii) Provide seating for those that cannot stand in line.
- viii) Be Patient. Customers will identify their needs to you

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2.16 HEARING DISABILITIES

- a) Hearing loss can cause problems in distinguishing certain frequencies, sounds or words. A person who is deaf, deafened or hard of hearing may be unable to:
- i) Use a public telephone
 - ii) Understand speech in noisy environments
 - iii) Pronounce words clearly enough to be understood by strangers
- b) **Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:**
Like other disabilities, hearing loss has a wide variety of degrees. Remember, customers who are deaf or hard of hearing may require assistive devices when communicating.

Here are some tips on how to service customers who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing:

- i) Attract the customer's attention before speaking. The best way is a gentle touch on the shoulder or gently waving your hand.
- ii) Always ask how you can help. Don't shout. Speak clearly.
- iii) Be clear and precise when giving directions, and repeat or rephrase if necessary. Make sure you have been understood.
- iv) Face the person and keep your hands and other objects away from your face and mouth. Speak to the customer not the support person if present.
- v) Deaf people may use a sign language interpreter to communicate – always direct your attention to the Deaf person and not the interpreter.
- vi) Any personal (e.g. financial) matters should be discussed in a private room to avoid other people overhearing.
- vii) If the person uses a hearing aid, try to speak in an area with few competing sounds.
- viii) If necessary, write notes back and forth to share information.

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- ix) Don't touch service animals – they are working and have to pay attention at all times.

2.17 DEAF-BLINDNESS DISABILITY

- a) Deaf-Blindness is a combination of hearing and vision loss. The result for a person who is deaf-blind has significant difficulty accessing information and performing daily activities. Deaf-blindness interferes with communication, learning, orientation and mobility. People who are deaf-blind communicate using various sign language systems, Braille, telephone devices, communication boards and any combination thereof. Many people who are deaf-blind use the services of an Intervener who relay information and facilitate auditory and visual information and act as sighted guides.
- b) **Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:**
Most people who are deaf-blind will be accompanied by an intervener, a professional who helps with communicating.

Interveners are trained in special sign language that involves touching the hands of the client in a two-hand, manual alphabet or finger spelling and may guide and interpret for their client.

Here are some tips on serving customers who are deaf-blind:

- i) Do not assume what a person can or cannot do. Some people who are deaf-blind have some sight or hearing, while others have neither.
- ii) A customer who is deaf-blind is likely to explain to you how to communicate with them or give you an assistance card or a note explaining how to communicate with them.
- iii) Do not touch or address the service animals – they are working and have to pay attention at all times.
- iv) Never touch a person who is deaf-blind suddenly or without permission unless it's an emergency.
- v) Understand that communication can take some time – be patient.
- vi) Direct your attention to your customer, not the Intervener.

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2.18 VISION DISABILITIES

- a) Vision disabilities reduce one's ability to see clearly. Many have limited vision such as tunnel vision, where a person has a loss of peripheral or side vision, or a lack of central vision, which means they cannot see straight ahead. Some can see the outline of objects while others can see the direction of light.

Vision loss can result in:

- i) Difficulty reading or seeing faces
- ii) Difficulty maneuvering in unfamiliar places
- iii) Inability to differentiate colours or distances
- iv) A narrow field of vision
- v) The need for bright light or contrast
- vi) Night blindness

b) **Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:**

Vision disabilities can restrict your customers' abilities to read signs, locate landmarks or see hazards. In some cases, it may be difficult to tell if a person has a vision disability. Others may use a service animal or assistive device.

Here are some tips on serving customers who have vision disabilities:

- i) Verbally identify yourself before making physical contact
- ii) If the person uses a service animal – do not touch or approach the animal – it is working
- iii) Verbally describe the setting, form, location as necessary
- iv) Offer your arm to guide the person. Do not grab or pull.
- v) Never touch your customer without asking permission, unless it is an emergency. Try not to move their belongings without warning.
- vi) Don't leave your customer in the middle of a room. Show them to a chair and provide them the back of the chair so they can sit independently or guide them to a comfortable location.

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vii) Don't walk away without saying good-bye.

2.19 INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

- a) Intellectual disabilities affect a person's ability to think and reason. It may be caused by genetic factors such as Downs Syndrome, exposure to environmental toxins, such as Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, brain trauma or psychiatric disorders.

A person with an intellectual disorder may have difficulty with:

- i) Understanding spoken and written information
 - ii) Conceptual information
 - iii) Perception of sensory information
 - iv) Memory
- b) **Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:**
 People with intellectual or developmental disabilities may have difficulty doing many things most of us take for granted. These disabilities can mildly or profoundly limit one's ability to learn. You may not be able to know that someone has this disability unless you are told, or you notice the way people act, ask questions or use body language.

As much as possible, treat your customers with an intellectual or developmental disability like anyone else. They may understand more than you think, and they will appreciate you treating them with respect.

Here are some tips on serving customers who have an intellectual or developmental disability:

- i) Don't assume what a person can or cannot do
- ii) Use clear, simple language
- iii) Be prepared to explain and provide examples regarding information
- iv) Remember that the person is an adult and unless you are informed otherwise, can make their own decisions
- v) Be patient and verify your understanding

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- vi) If you can't understand what is being said, don't pretend. Just ask again
- vii) Provide one piece of information at a time
- viii) Speak directly to your customer, not to their companion or support person.

2.20 SPEECH DISABILITIES

- a) Speech disabilities involve the partial or total loss of the ability to speak. Typical disabilities include problems with:
 - i) Pronunciation
 - ii) Pitch and loudness
 - iii) Hoarseness or breathiness
 - iv) Stuttering or slurring
- b) **Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:**
Some people have problems communicating. It could be the result of cerebral palsy, hearing loss, or another condition that makes it difficult to pronounce words, causes slurring or stuttering, or not being able to express one-self or understand written or spoken language. Some people who have severe difficulties may use communication boards or other assistive devices.

Here are some tips on serving customers with speech or language impairments:

- i) If possible communicate in a quiet environment
- ii) Give the person your full attention. Don't interrupt or finish their sentences.
- iii) Ask them to repeat as necessary, or to write their message.
- iv) If you are able, ask questions that can be answered 'yes' or 'no'.
- v) Verify your understanding
- vi) Patience, respect and willingness to find a way to communicate are your best tools.

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2.21 LEARNING DISABILITIES

a) Learning disabilities include a range of disorders that effect verbal and non-verbal information acquisition, retention, understanding and processing. People with a learning disability have average or above average intelligence, but take in and process information and express knowledge in different ways. Learning disabilities can result in:

- i) Difficulties in reading
- ii) Problem solving
- iii) Time management
- iv) Way finding
- v) Processing information

b) **Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:**

Learning disabilities are generally invisible and ability to function varies greatly – respond to any requests for verbal information, assistance in filling in forms and so on with courtesy.

- vi) If possible communicate in a quiet environment
- vii) Give the person your full attention. Don't interrupt or finish their sentences.
- viii) Offer assistance completing forms, understanding instructions and allow more time if required for making decisions.

2.22 MENTAL HEALTH DISABILITIES

a) Mental Health disabilities include a range of disorders however there are three main types of mental health disabilities:

- i) Anxiety
- ii) Mood
- iii) Behavioural

People with mental health disabilities may seem edgy or irritated; act aggressively; be perceived as pushy or abrupt; be unable to make a decision; start laughing or get angry for no apparent reason.

b) **Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:**

- i) Treat each person as an individual and with respect. Ask what would make him/her the most comfortable and respect his/her needs to the maximum extent possible.

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- ii) Try to reduce stress and anxiety in situations. Ask if a quieter location would be of assistance.
- iii) Stay calm and courteous, even if the customer exhibits unusual behaviour, focus on the service they need and how you can help.

2.23 OTHER DISABILITIES

- a) **SMELL** disabilities can involve the inability to sense smells or a hypersensitivity to odors and smells. A person with a smelling disability may have allergies to certain odours, scents or chemicals or may be unable to identify dangerous gases, smoke, fumes and spoiled food.
- b) **TOUCH** disabilities can affect a person's ability to sense texture, temperature, vibration or pressure. Touch sensations may be reduced or heightened resulting in a hypersensitivity to touch, temperature, or the opposite, numbness and the inability to feel touch sensations.
- c) **TASTE** disabilities can limit the experience of the four primary taste sensations; sweet, bitter, salty and sour. A person with a taste disability may be unable to identify spoiled food or noxious substances.
- d) **OTHER** disabilities result from range of other conditions, accidents, illnesses and diseases including ALS, asthma, diabetes, cancer, HIV/AIDS, environmental sensitivities, seizure disorders, heart disease, stroke and joint replacement.

Disabilities are not always visible or easy to distinguish.

2.24 TERMINOLOGY

The following is an excerpt from the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

[http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/English/how/howto_choose.htm]

Words can influence and reinforce the public's perception of people with disabilities. They can create either a positive view of people with disabilities or an indifferent, negative depiction.

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Here are some general tips that can help make your communication and interactions with or about people with all types of disabilities more successful.

- a) Use *disability* or *disabled*, not *handicap* or *handicapped*.
- b) Never use terms such as *retarded*, *dumb*, *psycho*, *moron* or *crippled*. These words are very demeaning and disrespectful to people with disabilities.
- c) Remember to put people first. It is proper to say *person with a disability*, rather than *disabled person*.
- d) If you don't know someone or if you are not familiar with the disability, it's better to wait until the individual describes his/her situation to you, rather than to make your own assumptions. Many types of disabilities have similar characteristics and your assumptions may be wrong.

The following preferred words and phrases will help you choose language that is neither demeaning nor hurtful. People with disabilities prefer these terms.

Affirmative phrases	Negative phrases
Person with intellectual, cognitive, developmental disability	Retarded, mentally defective
Person who is blind, person with vision loss	The blind
Person with a disability	The disabled, handicapped
Person who is deaf	The deaf, deaf and dumb
Person who is hard of hearing	Suffers a hearing loss
Person who has multiple sclerosis	Afflicted by MS
Person with cerebral palsy	CP victim
Person with epilepsy, person who has seizures	Epileptic
Person who uses a wheelchair	Confined or restricted to a wheel chair
Person who has muscular dystrophy	Stricken by MD
Person with a physical disability, a person who is physically disabled	Crippled, lame, deformed
Person who is unable to speak,	Dumb, mute

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person who uses synthetic speech	
Person with psychiatric disability	Crazy, nuts
Person who is successful, productive	Has overcome his/her disability, is courageous (when it implies the person has courage because of having a disability)

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NOTICE

ADMISSION FEES

An admission fee shall be charged to a support person accompanying persons with disabilities. The cost will be \$

Definitions:

“Persons with Disabilities” shall mean those individuals with disabilities as defined under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

“Support Persons” shall mean any person whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member, friend to who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communications, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

Carrie Sykes, Dip. M.A.,CMO
 Director of Corporate Services/Clerk
 (705) 635-2272, ext. 236

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NOTICE

SERVICE DISRUPTION

There will be a scheduled service disruption at the Township of Lake of Bays municipal office. The disruptions will be from _____. _____ until _____.

These disruptions include:

_____ (repairs to doors)

_____ (repairs to technology)

On behalf of the Township of Lake of Bays we would like to thank you for your patience in this matter.

Carrie Sykes, Dip. M.A.,CMO
Director of Corporate Services/Clerk
(705) 635-2272, ext. 236

TOWNSHIP OF LAKE OF BAYS PROCEDURE MANUAL			
Chapter:	Human Resources	Index No.	HR-9.1
Section:	Accessibility	Effective Date:	Jan 1/10
Subject:	Accessibility Standards for Customer Service	Revision Date:	Jan 1/18
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NOTICE

DISRUPTION IN SERVICE

There is currently an unexpected service disruption. The estimated time of the service disruption will be from _____. until _____.

These disruptions include:

_____ (repairs to doors)

_____ (repairs to technology)

On behalf of the Township of Lake of Bays we would like to thank you for your patience in this matter.

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Attachment "A"

Understanding Accessible
Customer Service Pamphlet

Attachment "B"

Accessible Customer Service Policy Pamphlet

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3.0 Responsibilities

- 3.01 The Chief Administrative Officer is responsible for ensuring that this procedure exists and the details contained herein are maintained.

- 3.02 Manager and Supervisors are responsible for communicating this policy to all employees and ensuring compliance to the policy.

- 3.03 Employees, volunteers, contractors and sub-contractors, or any person acting on behalf of the township who interacts with the public are responsible for complying with this policy at all times.