

## **ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS CUSTOMER SERVICE PROGRAM**

### **PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES**

**Accessible Customer Service follows four basic principles:**

- **Dignity**
- **Independence**
- **Integration**
- **Equal Opportunity**

### **FEEDBACK**

Feedback from our customers gives the Municipality of McDougall Council and staff the opportunities to learn and improve. The Municipality recognizes the right of our customers to make a complaint, compliment, or make suggestions on ways to improve our services.

To assist the Municipality of McDougall 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:

Accessibility Coordinator  
5 Barager Blvd, R.R. #3  
Parry Sound, Ontario P2A 2W9  
(705) 342-5252  
[www.municipalityofmcdougall.com](http://www.municipalityofmcdougall.com)

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

An annual report on the nature and results of the comments and feedback will be made by the Accessibility Coordinator to the CAO.

**If you are a person with a disability, or if you provide support for a person with a disability, please:**

- Let us know how we can help. We are open to discussing your ideas on the service options available.
- Help our staff understand your needs.

### **SERVICE ANIMALS, SUPPORT PERSON(S)**

Service animals, such as guide dogs, offer independence and security to many people with various disabilities. Some laws prohibit animals in certain areas- such as food preparation areas; however service animals are permitted in most public situations. Service animals are welcome in all municipal facilities with the exception of food preparation areas, such as the Waubamik Community Hall kitchen or McDougall Recreation Centre kitchen.

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

- Every employee shall use reasonable efforts to allow persons with disabilities to use their own assistive devices to access goods and/or services.
- Every employee shall allow persons with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal 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 disabilities. Other reasonable arrangements to provide goods and services shall be explored with the assistance of the person with disability.
- When a service animal is unruly or disruptive (jumping on people, biting, or other harmful behavior) an employee may ask the persons with disability to remove the animal from the area or refuse access to goods or services. Other reasonable arrangements to provide goods or services shall be explored with the assistance of the person with disability.
- Persons with disabilities may be accompanied by their support person while accessing goods and/or services.

### **ADMISSION FEES – ADVANCE NOTICE**

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.

### **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.

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

### **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.

## **TRAINING**

- 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 Municipality of McDougall including employees, agents, management.
- Current employees, agents, management, etc. shall receive training by **April 30, 2011**.
- New employees, agents, management, etc. shall receive training as soon as “practical”, after being hired.
- Ongoing training on changes to policies, procedures, and new equipments shall be provided.

The method and amount of training shall be geared to the trainee’s role in terms of accessibility.

## **TRAINING RECORDS**

Training records shall be kept, including the dates when the training is provided, number of individuals to whom the training was provided.

## **TERMINOLOGY**

### **Talk about Disabilities – Use the Right Words**

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.

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

- Use *disability* or *disabled*, not *handicap* or *handicapped*.
- Never use terms such as *retarded*, *dumb*, *psycho*, *moron* or *crippled*. These words are very demeaning and disrespectful to people with disabilities.
- Remember to put people first. It is proper to say *person with a disability*, rather than *disabled person*.

- 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.

For additional information visit the Ministry of Community and Social Services website at [<http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass>]

**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:

- Perform manual tasks such as holding a pen, turning a key or grip a door knob
- Move around independently
- Control the speed or coordination of movements
- Reach, pull or manipulate objects
- Have strength or endurance

### **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:

- Speak normally and directly to your customer. Don't speak to someone who is with them
- People with physical disabilities often have their own way of doing things. Ask before you help.
- Wheelchairs and other mobility devices are part of a person's personal space, don't touch, move or lean on them
- Provide your customer information about accessible features of the immediate environment (automatic doors, accessible washrooms, etc.)
- Keep ramps and corridors free of clutter
- If a counter is too high or wide, step around it to provide service

- Provide seating for those that cannot stand in line
- Be Patient. Customers will identify their needs to you.

**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:

- Use a public telephone
- Understand speech in noisy environments
- Pronounce words clearly enough to be understood by strangers

**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 providing service to customers who are deaf or hard of hearing:

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

**DEAF-BLINDNESS** is a combination of hearing and vision loss. The result for a person who is deaf-blind is 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.

**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:

- 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.
- 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
- Do not touch or address the service animals – they are working and have to pay attention at all times
- Never touch a person who is deaf-blind suddenly or without permission unless it's an emergency
- Understand that communication can take some time- be patient.
- Direct your attention to your customer, not the Intervener.

**VISION** disabilities reduce one's ability to see clearly. Very few people are totally blind. 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:

- Difficulty reading or seeing faces
- Difficulty maneuvering in unfamiliar places
- Inability to differentiate colours or distances
- A narrow field of vision
- The need for bright light, or contrast
- Night blindness

**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 guide dog or white cane.

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

- Verbally identify yourself before making physical contact
- If the person uses a service animal- do not touch or approach the animal- it is working.
- Verbally describe the setting, form, location as necessary
- Offer your arm to guide the person. Do not grab or pull.
- Never touch your customer without asking permission, unless it is an emergency
- Don't leave your customer in the middle of a room. Show them to a chair, or guide them to a comfortable location
- Don't walk away without saying good-bye

**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:

- Understanding spoken and written information
- Conceptual information
- Perception of sensory information
- Memory

**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:

- Don't assume what a person can or cannot do

- Use clear, simple language
- Be prepared to explain and provide examples regarding information
- Remember that the person is an adult and unless you are informed otherwise, can make their own decisions
- Be patient and verify your understanding
- If you can't understand what is being said, don't pretend. Just ask again
- Provide one piece of information at a time
- Speak directly to your customer, not to their companion or attendant

**SPEECH** disabilities involve the partial or total loss of the ability to speak. Typical disabilities include problems with:

- Pronunciation
- Pitch and loudness
- Hoarseness or breathiness
- Stuttering or slurring

**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:

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



**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:

- Difficulties in reading
- Problem solving
- Time management
- Way finding
- Processing information.

**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.

- Allow extra time to complete tasks if necessary.

**MENTAL HEALTH** disabilities include a range of disorders however there are three main types of mental health disability:

- Anxiety
- Mood
- Behavioral

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.

**Practices and procedures for Customer Service:**

- Treat each person as an individual. Ask what would make him/her the most comfortable and respect his/her needs to the maximum extent possible.
- Try to reduce stress and anxiety in situations.
- Stay calm and courteous, even if the customer exhibits unusual behavior, focus on the service they need and how you can help.

**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 odors, scents or chemicals or may be unable to identify dangerous gases, smoke, fumes and spoiled food.

**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.

**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.

**OTHER** disabilities result from a 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.

## **Sample Notices and Forms**

1. Notice – Admission Fees
2. Notice – Expected service disruption
3. Notice – Unexpected disruption in service
4. Form– Training Record
5. Notice/Form – Feedback/Follow Up

### **(1) ADMISSION FEES**

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 that are afflicted with a disability 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.

(2) **SERVICE DISRUPTION**

There will be a scheduled service disruption at the \_\_\_\_\_ municipal office. The disruptions will be from \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_.

These disruptions include:

\_\_\_\_\_ (repairs to doors)

\_\_\_\_\_ (repairs to technology)

On behalf of the Municipality of McDougall we would like to thank you for your patience in this matter.

Accessibility Coordinator

705-342-5252.

**(3) DISRUPTION IN SERVICE**

There is currently an unexpected service disruption. The estimated time of the service disruption will be from \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_.

These disruptions include:

\_\_\_\_\_ (repairs to doors)

\_\_\_\_\_ (repairs to technology)

On behalf of the Municipality of McDougall we would like to thank you for your patience in this matter.

Accessibility Coordinator

705-342-5252.

(4)

**ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER  
SERVICE POLICY**

**TRAINING RECORD**

<b>Name of Participant:</b>	
<b>Position:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Location:</b>	
<b>Type of Training:</b>	
<b>Notes:</b>	
<b>Trainer's Signature:</b>	
<b>Participant's Signature:</b>	



(5) FEEDBACK FOR THE PROVISION OF GOODS OR SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Dear Valued Customers,

We strive to improve accessibility for our customers with disabilities. We would like to hear your comments, questions and suggestions about the provision of our goods or services to people with disabilities. Please contact Accessibility Coordinator in person, or by calling at 705-342-5252, or e-mail [www.municipalityofmcdougall.com](http://www.municipalityofmcdougall.com) to share your comments.

Thank you.

Council and Staff

Municipality of McDougall

**RECORD OF CUSTOMER FEEDBACK**

Date Feedback received:

Name of Customer (**Optional**)

Contact information (**Subject to MFIPPA**)

Details:

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Follow-Up:

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Action to be taken:

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Staff member: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**TEACHING POINTS**

**TALK ABOUT DISABILITIES: CHOOSE THE RIGHT WORDS**

Words are powerful. They can influence and reinforce perceptions of people with disabilities.

The words we use can create either a positive view of people with disabilities or a negative depiction.

Here are some general tips to follow when talking to or about people with disabilities.

Say "disability" not "handicap".

Put people first. "Person with a disability" puts the focus on the person, not the disability.

For specific disabilities, say "person with epilepsy" or "person who uses a wheelchair".

Don't use statements that make it seem like a person with a disability should be pitied, such as "victim of", "suffers with", or "stricken with" a particular illness or disability.

If you're not familiar with the disability, don't make assumptions. Wait until the person describes their situation to you. Many types of disabilities have similar characteristics. Your assumptions may be wrong.

Here are some words and phrases to use and to avoid.

<b>Don't use</b>	<b>Use</b>
The aged The elderly	Seniors
Autistic	A person with autism A person with Autism Spectrum Disorder
Birth defect Congenital defect Deformity	A person who has a congenital disability A person with a disability since birth
The blind The visually impaired	A person who is blind A person with vision loss
Brain damaged	A person with a brain injury A person with an acquired brain injury
Confined to a wheelchair Wheelchair bound	A person who uses a wheelchair

Crazy Insane Lunatic Psycho	A person with a mental illness A person with a mental disorder A person with a mood disorder (for example, a person with depression, a person with bipolar
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<p>Mental Mental patient Maniac Neurotic Psychotic Unsound mind Schizophrenic</p>	<p>disorder) A person with a personality disorder (for example, a person antisocial personality disorder) A person with an anxiety disorder (for example a person with obsessive-compulsive disorder) A person with an eating disorder (for example a person with anorexia nervosa, a person with bulimia) A person with schizophrenia</p>
<p>Cripple Crippled Lame Physically challenged</p>	<p>A person with a disability A person with a physical disability A person with a spinal cord injury A person who uses a walker A person who uses a mobility aid A person with arthritis</p>
<p>The deaf The hearing impaired</p>	<p>A person who is deaf (for example, a person with profound hearing loss) A person who is deafened (for example, a person who has become deaf later in life) A person who is hard of hearing (for example, person with hearing loss) If you are talking about the Deaf community and their culture (whose preferred way of communication is sign language), you can use "the Deaf"</p>
<p>Deaf and dumb Deaf mute</p>	<p>A person who is deaf and does not talk</p>
<p>The deaf-blind</p>	<p>A person who is deafblind (for example, a person who has any combination of vision and hearing loss)</p>
<p>Epileptic</p>	<p>A person who has epilepsy</p>
<p>Fits Spells Attacks</p>	<p>Seizures</p>
<p>The handicapped Invalid Patient</p>	<p>Person with a disability</p>

Municipality of McDougall – Accessibility Standards Program

The disabled	
Hidden disability Invisible disability	Non-visible disability
Learning disabled Learning disordered Dyslexic	A person with a learning disability or people with learning disabilities
Mentally retarded Idiot Simple Retarded Feeble-minded Imbecile	A person with an intellectual disability A person with a developmental disability
Midget Dwarf	A little person A person of short stature A person who has a form of dwarfism
Mongoloid Mongolism Downs	A person with Down Syndrome A person with an intellectual or developmental disability
Normal	A person without a disability A person who is not disabled Specifically, a person who is sighted, a hearing person, a person who is ambulatory
Spastic	A person who has muscle spasms
Stutterer	A person who stutters A person with a communication disorder