

# Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)

## Customer Service Standard

The Company is committed to ensuring that it treats customers with disabilities with dignity and respect, and that its policies, practices, and procedures are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equality of opportunity.

The definition of a disability under the AODA includes:

- any degree of physical disability, malformation, or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness
- a mental disorder or condition of mental impairment or developmental disability
- a learning disability or dysfunction

Examples of disabilities are mental illness, epilepsy, amputation, paralysis, impaired vision or hearing, speech impediment, reliance on a guide dog, wheelchair, or other assistive devices.

You are required to follow applicable policies, practices, and procedures for providing goods and services to customers with disabilities. If you encounter a situation that is not expressly covered in our accessibility policy, you are required to contact your manager to determine how goods and services will be provided to that customer. Under no condition should you inform a customer that you are unable to assist them until you have spoken with your manager.

When communicating with a person with a disability, please do so in a respectful manner that takes into account their disability. For example, if your customer is using a wheelchair, consider sitting down so that you can see them eye to eye; if your customer has impaired hearing, consider moving to a quieter area or a brightly lit area where it will be easier to read lips.

As you can see from the definition of a disability above, there are many different types of disabilities. It may not always be obvious that your customer has a disability, especially if it is not a physical disability. Do not make assumptions about whether somebody has a disability. Even if you are aware of a disability, try not to make assumptions about what the person can and cannot do, or how they would prefer to communicate. If you find that you are having trouble communicating with somebody, simply ask politely if there is anything you can do to make the discussion easier.

Customers who use service animals (such as guide dogs) or support persons are welcome to bring those animals or persons onto the parts of company's premises which are open to the public; however, service animals are not permitted where animals are prohibited by law.

Please remember that service animals are working and are not to be pet or distracted in other ways. If a customer uses a support person, make sure to talk to the customer directly, not to the support person.

We will provide you with training on the AODA Customer Service Standard. Training will include:

- a) the purpose of the AODA
- b) the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/08)



- c) information about the Company's policies and procedures pertaining to the provision of services to persons with disabilities
- d) how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities
- e) what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing a location
- f) how to interact with people with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a service animal or support person

We will make reasonable efforts to inform customers of any disruption to facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. When necessary, you are expected to communicate the fact that there is a disruption, the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available, to customer.

The Company has a formal feedback process that customers can use to provide us feedback on how we have served customers with disabilities. If you receive any feedback about our service of customers with disabilities, or an inquiry as to how to leave feedback, please advise them to contact management in person, in writing, by telephone, or by e-mail.

