



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF FAUQUIER-STRICKLAND

SUBJECT: **Accessibility Standards for Customer Service**

POLICY TYPE: **Corporate**

POLICY NUMBER: **COR-004**

DATE ADOPTED:

REVIEW DATE: _____

POLICY STATEMENT

The Township of Fauquier-Strickland is committed to recognizing the diverse needs of its residents and customers by striving to provide services that are accessible to all individuals.

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

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.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

This policy is governed by Ontario Regulation 191/11, which sets accessibility standards for information and communications, employment, transportation, design of public spaces and customer service.

DEFINITIONS

“Assistive Device” means an auxiliary aid such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids, and medical aids.

“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 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” means 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 physical 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” means any person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to assist with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs, or with access to goods or services.

ASSISTIVE DEVICE

A person with a disability may provide his/her own assistive device for the purpose of obtaining, using, and benefitting from the Township’s goods and services. Employees shall ensure reasonable efforts in allowing a person with a disability to use such devices.

Exception may occur if the assistive device can pose a risk to the health and safety of others on the premises as well as the health and safety of the person with a disability. If an exception occurs, the Township may offer other reasonable measures to assist the person with a disability in obtaining, using, and benefitting from the goods or services provided.

SELF-SERVICE KIOSKS

The municipality will incorporate accessibility features or take into account accessibility for people with disabilities when designing, purchasing or acquiring self-service kiosks.

SERVICE ANIMAL

Every employee of the Township shall allow a person with a disability to be accompanied by their service animal unless the animal is excluded by law from the premises. In such case, employees shall offer other reasonable measures to assist the person with a disability in obtaining, using, and benefiting from the goods or services the Township provides.

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, the Township may ask the person with a disability to provide documentation from a regulated health professional confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to his or her disability.

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.

SUPPORT PERSON

The Township of Fauquier-Strickland shall allow persons with disabilities, who require to be accompanied by a support person, into all Township premises that are owned and operated public facilities. Both persons are permitted to enter the premises together and the person with a disability will have access to their support person.

NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTION

Notice of Service Disruptions must be provided when facilities or services that people with disabilities may use to access Township goods or services are temporarily unavailable or if the goods or service are expected in the near future to be temporarily unavailable.

The notice must include the following information:

- a) The reason and information for disruption
- b) Anticipated duration
- c) Description of alternate facilities or services, if available
- d) Contact information

In the case of an unscheduled disruption, the Notice will be posted at the location of the service disruption as soon as practically possible.

In the case of a scheduled disruption, the Township will post the Notice prior to the disruption, at the physical location, on its website and if appropriate will advertise the disruption with local media outlets. The Notice will be posted to allow for sufficient time to inform ratepayers.

DOCUMENTATION AND FEEDBACK

Customer feedback allows the Township of Fauquier-Strickland to learn and improve. The Township encourages individuals to provide feedback on how we can improve our services with respect to accessibility.

Individuals wishing to provide feedback can do so by sending a completed feedback form to the following:

By mail: Director of Municipal Services
 Township of Fauquier-Strickland
 P.O. Box 40
 20-A Doyon Street
 Fauquier, ON
 P0L 1G0

By email: info@fauquierstrickland.com

TRAINING

The Township will ensure that all persons to whom this policy applies receive training as required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. The amount and formal 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.
- Instruction on the Township'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 Township'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 Township's premises that may help with the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities.

The Township 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 Township 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 Township.

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 Township’s website, and available through the Clerk’s Office.

POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be periodically reviewed and updated as required.

