



CORPORATION OF THE VILLAGE OF SUNDRIDGE

**ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER
SERVICE POLICY
SCHEDULE "A" TO BY-LAW NO. 2014-064**

**Accessibility Standards
for Customer Service**

**ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS
WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 2005**

Ontario Regulation 429/07

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ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

Purpose/Background Information

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (the “AODA”) is a Provincial Act with the purpose of developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards to improve accessibility across the Province.

Under the AODA, Ontario Regulation 429/07 entitled “Accessibility Standards for Customer Service” came into force on January 1, 2008. That Regulation establishes accessibility standards specific to customer service for public sector organizations and other persons or organizations that provide goods and services to members of the public or other third parties.

This policy is drafted in accordance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) and addresses the following:

- The provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities;
- The use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities;
- The use of service animals by persons with disabilities;
- The use of support persons with disabilities;
- Notice of temporary disruptions in services and facilities;
- Training;
- Customer feedback regarding the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities; and
- Notice of availability and format of documents.

Summary of Standard Requirement

The following is a summary of requirements for the accessibility Standards for the Customer Service Policy:

1. Establish policies, practices and procedures on providing goods and services to people with disabilities.
2. Use reasonable efforts to ensure that policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the core principles in independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.
3. Set a policy on allowing people to use their own personal assistive devices to access our goods and use our services and about any other measures our organization offers (assistive devices, services, methods to enable them to access our goods and use our services.
4. Communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability.
5. Allow people with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal in those areas of the premises we own or operate that are open to the public, unless the

animal is excluded by another law. If a service animal is excluded by law, use other measures to provide services to the person with a disability.

6. Permit people with disabilities who use a support person to bring that person with them while accessing goods or services in premises open to the public or third parties.
7. Where admission fees are charged, provide notice ahead of time on what admission, if any, would be charged for a support person accompanying a person with a disability.
8. Provide notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access or use our goods or services are temporarily disrupted.
9. Train staff, volunteers, agents and any other people who interact with the public or other third parties on our behalf on a number of topics as outlined in the Customer Service Standards.
10. Train staff, volunteers, agents and any other people who are involved, in developing our policies, practices and procedures on the provision of goods or services on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standards.
11. Establish a process for people to provide feedback on how we provide goods or services to people with disabilities and how we will respond to any feedback. Make the information readily available to the public.
12. Document in writing all our policies, practices and procedures for providing accessible customer service and meet other document requirements set out in the standards.
13. Notify customer that documents required under the Customer Service Standards are available, upon request.

Our Mission

The mission of the Corporation of the Village of Sundridge is to make reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies and procedures are consistent in providing quality goods and services that are accessible to all persons that we serve.

Our Commitment

In fulfilling our mission, the Corporation of the Village of Sundridge strives at all times to provide its 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 services, in the same place and in a similar way as other customers.

Providing Service to People with Disabilities

The Corporation of the Village of Sundridge is committed to excellence in serving all residents and visitors including people with disabilities and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

- a. Communication -We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. We will train staff who communicate with the public on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

- b. Telephone Services – We are committed to providing fully accessible telephone services to our resident and visitors. We will train staff to communicate with the public over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly. We will offer to communicate with individuals by email or fax, if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

Assistive Devices

A device used to assist persons with disabilities in carrying out activities or in accessing the services of persons or organization covered by the Customer Service Standard (i.e. communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids, such as canes, crutches, wheelchairs or hearing aids). We are committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our services. We will ensure that our staff is trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by persons with disabilities while accessing our services. We will also ensure that staff know how to use the following assistive devices available on our premises for the public:

- Keyed elevator at the Sundridge Community Centre for people with limited mobility.

Billing

We are committed to providing accessible tax bills to our ratepayers. Upon request, we will provide enlarged copies of tax bills. We will answer any questions that our residents or visitors may have about the content of the tax bill in person, by telephone or by email.

Use of Service Animals and Support Persons

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties. We will also ensure that all staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter the Village of Sundridge's premises with his or her support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on our premises.

When there is a charge for admission to events and attractions provided by the Village of Sundridge, the regular admission fee will be charged to a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person, but there will be no admission charge for the support person. Patrons will be informed of this by a notice that will be posted at the Village of Sundridge's premises where the event or attraction is taking place and will also be included in any flyers, poster, or website postings for the event.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

The Village of Sundridge will provide the public with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. The notice will be placed at all public entrances and service counters on our premises. The 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 and Civil Protection Act. Any reduction or suspension of services would be dictated by the nature and scale of the emergency and the resources allocated. The impacts of the emergency may destroy telecommunication systems, result in travel restrictions and closure of facilities.

Training of Staff

The Corporation of the Village of Sundridge will provide training to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies, practices and procedures.

Practices and Procedures – Appendix “I”

- Establish practices and procedures
- Evaluate practices and procedures
- Revise practices and procedures as required

Feedback

The Corporation of the Village of Sundridge is committed to providing goods and services to all members of the public it serves.

Questions about this Policy

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to residents and visitors with disabilities. If anyone has a question about this policy, or if the purpose of this is not understood, the Clerk or his or her designate should provide an explanation.

APPENDIX "I"
BEST PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

WELCOMING CUSTOMERS WITH DISABILITIES

You can broaden your customer base by welcoming everyone to your municipality including customers with disabilities. By learning how to service people with disabilities, you can attract more customers and improve your service to everyone.

TIPS ON HOW TO WELCOME CUSTOMERS WITH DISABILITIES

- Treat people with disabilities with the same respect and consideration you have for everyone else
- Use disability or disabled, not handicap or handicapped
- Remember to put people first. It is proper to say person with a disability, rather than disabled person
- Patience, optimism, and a willingness to find a way to communicate are your best tools
- Smile, relax and keep in mind that people with disabilities are just people
- Do not make assumptions about what type of disability or disabilities a person has
- Some disabilities are not visible. Take the time to get to know your customers' needs
- Be patient. People with some kinds of disabilities may take a little longer to understand and respond.
- If you are not sure what to do, ask you customer "May I help you?"
- If you cannot understand what someone is saying, just politely ask again
- Ask before you offer to help – do not just jump in. Your customers with disabilities know if they need help and how you can provide it
- Find a good way to communicate. A good start is to listen carefully
- Look at your customer, but do not stare. Speak directly to a person with a disability, not to their interpreter or someone who is with them
- Use plain language and speak in short sentences
- Do not touch or address service animals – they are working and have to pay attention at all times
- Ask permission before touching a wheelchair or a piece of equipment

APPENDIX "II"
SAMPLE DOCUMENT
NOTIFYING THE PUBLIC ABOUT DISRUPTIONS IN SERVICE

Sample 1

Dear Residents and Visitors:

The community centre elevator will be out of service from April 1 to 3 for routine maintenance. This has been arranged for a time when no events are scheduled in the upstairs hall. If you need to access the upstairs at the Sundridge Community Centre during this time the Village of Sundridge staff will make every effort to assist you. If you have questions or concerns, please call (705) 384-5316.

Thank you.

Clerk

Sample 2

Dear Resident and Visitors:

Our accessible washroom on the lower level of the Sundridge Community Centre is out of service due to a broken pipe. A repair person will be on the premises tomorrow to fix it. In the interim, please use the accessible washroom on the upper level. We apologize for any inconvenience.

Thank you.

Clerk

APPENDIX "III"
SAMPLE DOCUMENT
Customer Service Feedback Form – Obtaining Feedback

Sample 1

The Corporation of the Village of Sundridge is committed to serving our residents and visitor and we strive to meet everyone's needs.

Please tell us the date and time of your visit:

Did we respond to your customer service needs today? ___yes ___no

Was our customer service provided to you in an accessible manner?
___yes (please explain below) ___somewhat (please explain below)

Did you have any problems accessing our services?
___yes (please explain below) ___somewhat (please explain below) ___ No

Please add any other comments you may have:

Contact information (optional):

Thank you.

Clerk

Sample 2

Record of Customer Feedback

Date feedback received:
Name of Customer (Optional)
Contact information (if appropriate)

Details:

Follow Up:

Action to be Taken:

Staff Member:

Date:

APPENDIX "IV"
SAMPLE DOCUMENT
Sample Notices on the Feedback Process

Feedback process on provision of services to people with disabilities

Sample 1

Dear Valued Customers:

We strive to improve accessibility for our residents and visitors with disabilities. We would like to hear your comments, questions and suggestions about the provision of our services to people with disabilities. Please contact the Village of Sundridge by mail or at (705) 384-5316 or by email (villageoffice@sundridge.ca) to share your comments.

Thank you.

Clerk

Sample 2

Dear Valued Customers:

We strive to improve accessibility for our residents and visitors with disabilities. We welcome your feedback. Please call (705) 384-5316 or email (villageoffice@sundridge.ca) to share your comments, or request a copy of our accessibility policy.

Thank you.

Clerk