



City of
Peterborough

TO: Members of the Committee of the Whole

FROM: Brian Horton, Senior Director of Corporate Services

MEETING DATE: June 29, 2009

**SUBJECT: Report CPFPRS09-015
Accessible Customer Service Policy**

PURPOSE

A report to recommend an Accessible Customer Service Policy be approved to comply with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) made under the Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act, 2005.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve the recommendation outlined in Report CPFPRS09-015 dated June 29, 2009 of the Senior Director of Corporate Services as follows:

That the Accessible Customer Service Policy, as set out in Appendix A to Report CPFPRS09-015, be approved.

BUDGET AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Sufficient funding is available in the 2009 Capital Budget to hire the Accessible Compliance Coordinator and for some minor expenditures that may be incurred. Training is planned for the fall of 2009 utilizing in-house resources and any backfilling of positions, while training is taking place, will be funded from departmental operating budgets.

BACKGROUND

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) became law on June 13, 2005. Under this legislation, the government of Ontario is developing mandatory accessibility standards that will identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities in key areas of daily living. Under the legislation, municipalities will be required to establish a series of standards including Customer Service, Information and Communications, Built Environment, Employment and Transportation. The standards will apply to private and public sector organizations across Ontario.

Compliance with the AODA is a major corporate project for the City of Peterborough. Five sub-projects will facilitate implementation of each of the five Accessibility Standards as they are released. The project will be overseen by a Steering Committee and guidance will be provided by a Standing Project Team. A new Accessibility Compliance Coordinator position was approved in the 2009 Budget and recruitment is currently underway. The Accessibility Steering Committee is comprised of:

- Manager of Financial Planning and Revenue Services (Chair)
- Senior Director of Corporate Services
- Director of Utility Services
- Director of Community Services
- Director of Planning and Development Services
- Accessible Compliance Coordinator

The **Accessible Customer Service** (ACS) standard is the first standard and has been set out through Ontario Regulation 429/07. It came into force on January 1, 2008. Public sector organizations will be required to comply by January 1, 2010. The standard addresses business practices and training needed to provide better customer service to people with disabilities.

In order to comply with the Accessible Customer Service Standard, the City of Peterborough must:

1. Establish policies, practices, and procedures on the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities that are consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity. Procedures must include details on the use of assistive devices, service animals, and support persons as well as notice of temporary service disruptions and a process to receive and respond to feedback.
2. Communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability.

3. Train staff, volunteers, contractors and any other people who interact with the public or other third parties on behalf of the City as well as those involved in developing City policies, practices and procedures on the provision of Accessible Customer Service.

The proposed Accessible Customer Service Policy, as set out in Appendix A, is a legislated requirement of the ACS and will be the guiding corporate document on the provision of goods and services to all residents, including people with disabilities. Additional procedures will be developed on the use of assistive devices, support persons, service animals, accessibility training, communicating with people with disabilities, notice of temporary service disruption, and customer feedback.

The Accessibility Steering Committee approved the Accessible Customer Service Policy at their meeting on June 2, 2009. The policy was also reviewed by the Council for Person with Disabilities (CPD) at their May 21, 2009 meeting. Staff will continue to update, and seek feedback from, the CPD throughout the project.

It is recommended that the Accessible Customer Service Policy, as set out in Appendix A, be approved.

Submitted by,

Brian Horton
Senior Director of Corporate Services

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Appendix A – Accessible Customer Service Draft Policy



DRAFT POLICY

ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

Policy Type:	Municipal Services	Effective Date:	2010-01-01
Department:	Corporate Services	Approval Level:	Council
Division:	Financial Planning and Revenue Services	Policy #:	
Section/Facility:	Accessibility	Revision #:	N/A

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To facilitate compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07), made under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and other relevant sections of that Act as well as the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001.

2.0 APPLICATION

- 2.1 This policy and its related procedures apply to:
- .1 Every Customer Service Representative (CSR).
 - .2 Anyone who participates in or oversees the development of City policies, practices, and procedures governing the provision of City goods or services to members of the public or other third parties.

3.0 DEFINITIONS/ACRONYMS (As Required)

Agent - A person or business providing goods or services on behalf of the City through a contract or agreement.

Assistive Device - A device that is used by people with disabilities to help with daily living, including cognition aids, communication aids, medical aids, and personal mobility aids. Examples include: wheel chairs, walkers, white canes, oxygen tanks, portable chalkboards, and electronic communication devices.

City - The Corporation of the City of Peterborough.



DRAFT POLICY

ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

3.0 DEFINITIONS/ACRONYMS (As Required)

City Goods or Services - Goods or services provided by the City or an agent on behalf of the City.

Customer Service Representative (CSR) - An employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise who, on behalf of the City, provides or oversees the provision of City goods or services to members of the public or other third parties.

Disability - "Disability" as defined in the Human Rights Code, 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; ("handicap").

Third Party - A representative of a business or organization who is receiving City goods or services or acting in an official capacity. Examples include: Provincial inspectors, vendors, or local media.



DRAFT POLICY

ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

4.0 POLICY STATEMENT(S)

- 4.1** The City will use reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, procedures, and practices regarding the provision of goods and services to all residents, including people with disabilities, are consistent with the following principles:
- .1 Goods and services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of all residents;
 - .2 The provision of goods and services to people with disabilities will be integrated with conventional service 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 City goods and services; and
 - .3 All residents will be given an equal opportunity to obtain, use, and benefit from City goods and services.
- 4.2** People with disabilities can use assistive devices to obtain, use, or benefit from City goods or services. Exceptions could occur if a Customer Service Representative (CSR) determines that the assistive device poses a safety risk. In such situations, and in situations where greater accessibility may be provided, CSRs will offer alternate service options.
- 4.3** The City will ensure that all CSRs receive accessible customer service training in accordance with section 6 of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07).
- 4.4** When communicating with a person with a disability, CSRs will do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.



DRAFT POLICY

ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

5.0 APPENDIX, RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES & LINKS

5.1 Pertinent Resources

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_05a11_e.htm

Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_01o32_e.htm

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07)

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_070429_e.htm

5.2 Related Policies

N/A

5.3 Related Procedures

Accessibility Training Procedure

Assistive Devices and Services Procedure

Communicating with People with Disabilities Procedure

Customer Service Feedback Procedure

Notice and Provision of Documents in Accessible Formats Procedure

Service Animals Procedure

Support Persons Procedure

Temporary Disruptions Procedure

5.4 Related Forms

Accessibility Report Template

5.5 Miscellaneous

Accessibility Training Resources

6.0 AMENDMENTS/ REVIEWS

Next Review Date	
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Date (yyyy-mm-dd)	Section(s) Amended	Comments
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