



Town of Saugeen Shores Corporate Policy

Policy Title:	Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
Policy Number:	POL-ADM-002
Category:	Administrative
Department:	Corporate Services
Author:	Clerk's Division
Approved by:	Council
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1. Intent

This Policy is to establish Accessibility Standards for Customer Service to identify, remove, and prevent barriers within the Town of Saugeen Shores.

2. Policy Statement

The Town of Saugeen Shores (The Town) is committed to being responsive to the needs of the community. To do this, we must recognize the diverse needs of individuals and respond by striving to provide services and facilities that are barrier-free to all. As an employer, and a provider of services, the Town is committed to ensuring its services are provided in an accessible manner.

The Town will promote a barrier-free community through the development of policies, procedures, and practices and by ensuring they consider people with disabilities. To do this the Town must ensure the by-laws, policies, procedures, and practices address integration, independence, dignity, and equal opportunity.

3. Authority

3.1 *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07* requires that every provider of goods or services shall establish policies, practices, and procedures governing the provision of its goods or services to persons with disabilities.

3.2 This Policy was adopted by Council under By-law 68-2009.

4. Scope

This Policy applies to all members of Council, Committees of Council, volunteers, contractors, and all employees of the Town of Saugeen Shores.

5. Definitions

“Accessibility Standard” means an accessibility standard made by regulation under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act;

“Barrier” as defined under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice;

“Blind Person” as defined in the *Blind Persons’ Rights Act* means a person who because of blindness is dependent on a guide dog or white cane;

“Disability” as defined under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* 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. (d) a mental disorder, or
- e. (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;

“Guide Dog” as defined in the *Blind Persons’ Rights Act*, means a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having the qualifications prescribed by the regulations;

“Service Animal” for a person with a disability. For the purpose of this policy, an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability.

“The Town” means the Corporation of the Town of Saugeen Shores.

6. Policy

a. Principles

Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure the following:

- (i) That information, goods, and services be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- (ii) The provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities, and others, will be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or permanently, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use, or benefit from the goods and services.
- (iii) Persons with disabilities will be allowed equal to that of persons without disabilities to obtain, use, and benefit from the goods and services.

b. Procedures and Practices:

Procedures and practices will strive to reflect or achieve the following:

- (i) When communicating with a person with a disability, the Town will do so in a manner that considers the person’s disability.
- (ii) All municipal representatives to whom this policy applies shall receive appropriate training in the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities.
- (iii) Persons with disabilities accompanied by a service animal guide dog or other service animal should not be restricted in obtaining, using, or benefiting from the Town’s goods and services.
- (iv) Persons with disabilities requiring a support person should not be restricted in obtaining, using, or benefiting from the Town’s goods and services.
- (v) Persons with disabilities may use their assistive devices to obtain, use, or benefit from the goods and services offered by the Town.
- (vi) Reasonable notice will be provided when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access the Town’s goods or services are temporarily disrupted.
- (vii) A feedback process will be provided to allow the public the opportunity to provide feedback from the public about the delivery of goods and services to persons with disabilities.
- (viii) The public should have the opportunity to be aware of the availability of documents related to this policy.

c. Procedures

Support Persons

A support person is a person who accompanies a person with a disability to assist him or her with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs, or access to goods or services.

The Town will ensure that a person with a disability, who is accompanied by a support person, is allowed to enter municipally owned and operated public facilities with their support person and will not prevent the person with the disability from having access to the support person while on the premises.

The Town reserves the right to require the person with a disability be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, if it is considered necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with a disability or others on the premises.

The Town will waive admission fees for support persons who accompany a person with a disability, into Town-owned and operated facilities where admission is charged by the Town:

- (a) The Town may require advance notice to facilitate availability, etc.
- (b) Member of the public is encouraged to notify a staff member of the presence of the support person in advance.
- (c) If there is confidential information to be disclosed, consent must be received from the person with the disability.
- (d) The Town reserves the right to require a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the support person for the reasons relating to the disability.

Assistive Devices

The Town will allow persons with disabilities to use their assistive devices to obtain, use, or benefit from the services offered by the Town.

Should a person with a disability be unable to access the Town's services through the use of their assistive device, the Town will ensure the following measures are taken:

- (a) Determine if service is inaccessible, based upon individual requirements.
- (b) Assess service delivery and potential service options to meet the needs of the individual.
- (c) Notify persons with disability of alternative services and how they can access the service, temporarily or permanently.

Service Animals

The Town will allow persons with a disability accompanied by a service animal into all Town-owned and operated public facilities and will ensure that the person is permitted to keep the service animal with him or her unless the service animal is otherwise excluded by law.

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, the Town may ask the person with a disability for a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to his or her disability.

If a service animal is excluded by law from the premises, the Town will ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the provider's goods or services.

Temporary Service Disruption

The Town is aware that the operation of its services and facilities is important to the public. However, temporary disruptions in the Town's services and facilities may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the Town's control or knowledge.

If, to obtain, use, or benefit from the Town's goods or services, persons with disabilities usually use facilities or services of the Town (for example an

elevator) and if there is a temporary disruption in those facilities or services in whole or in part, the Town shall give notice of the disruption to the public.

Notice of the disruption must include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available.

Notice may be given by posting the information at a conspicuous place on premises owned or operated by the Town, as well as by posting it on the municipal website, or by such other method as is reasonable in the circumstances.

If the Town's website should expect a temporary service disruption, advance notice shall be provided on the website where possible, in keeping with the conditions of the service disruption section of this policy.

Feedback Process

To submit feedback:

Should a member of the public wish to provide feedback regarding the provision of goods or services provided to persons with disabilities:

- (a) Any member of the public with a complaint or concern should discuss it with the Manager of the staff person who was involved in the situation.
- (b) Should the discussion not resolve the complaint, or the member of the public is uncomfortable discussing the issue with the staff person, the member of the public should fill out a complaint form. A staff person can assist the member of the public with the complaint form in a manner that takes into consideration their disability.
- (c) The information to be provided by the members of the public should include their personal contact information, the date, a description of the complaint, and what the member of the public recommends to resolve the complaint. This information should be documented on the complaint form.
- (d) The complaint should be forwarded to the manager responsible for the department and the Department Head.
- (e) The Department Head will attempt to resolve the complaint in a timely manner, with the assistance of the Clerk.
- (f) The member of the public will be contacted once a resolution has been reached.

To submit a suggestion:

Should a member of the public wish to provide the Town with a suggestion on how to improve providing goods or services to persons with disabilities:

- (a) The member of the public will inform the Clerk of the suggestion, who will discuss it with the Manager responsible for the department.
- (b) Staff members will assist members of the public in filling out the form, should they require assistance.
- (c) The Member of the public will be notified in a timely manner of how the Town will proceed with their suggestion.
- (d) Staff response should include an explanation of how we will implement the suggestion, a response indicating further investigation or an explanation why we are unable to implement the suggestion.

Although the complaint form and suggestion form are the preferred methods of submitting feedback to the Town, the Town will receive feedback in person, by telephone, in writing, or by delivering an electronic text by email provided the member of the public provides their personal contact information, the date, a description of the complaint or suggestion, and what the member of the public recommends or requests from the Town.

Training

The Town shall ensure that the following persons receive training about the provision of its goods or services to persons with disabilities:

- (a) Every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the municipality, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer, or otherwise.
- (b) Every person who participates in developing the municipality's policies, practices, and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to members of the public or other third parties.

The training will include a review of the purposes of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and the requirements of this policy and instruction about the following matters:

- (a) How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability, as outlined in this policy and procedures.
- (b) How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or other service animal or the assistance of a support person, as outlined in this policy and procedures.
- (c) How to use equipment or devices available on the provider's premises or otherwise provided by the provider that may help with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability.
- (d) What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the provider's goods or services.

The training will be provided as soon as practicable upon an individual being assigned the applicable duties as well as on an ongoing basis as changes occur to the Town's policies, procedures, and practices governing the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities.

The Town will log and retain records which will record the details of the training provided, as well as the name of the person, location, and date the training was completed.

Notice of the Availability and Format of Documents Required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07)

The Town shall notify persons to whom it provides goods and services that documents required under this legislation, including the Town's Accessible Customer Service Policy, procedures, and practices, notices of temporary disruptions, training records, and the written feedback process are available upon request, subject to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act ([MFIPPA](#)).

This notice will be given by posting the information at a conspicuous place in the municipal office, by posting it on the Town website, or by such other method as is reasonable in the circumstances.

When providing a document to a person with a disability, the Town will provide the document, or the information contained in the document, in a format that takes the person's disability into account.

Contact Information

For more information about this policy, or questions related to accessibility at the Town of Saugeen Shores, please contact:

Clerk
Town of Saugeen Shores
600 Tomlinson Drive, P.O. Box 820
Port Elgin, ON N0H 2C0
Phone: 519-832-2008
Email: clerk@saugeenshores.ca

Links

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005:

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/05a11>

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07:

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/070429#:~:text=Purpose%20and%20a,1.,least%20one%20employee%20in%20Ontario>

Blind Persons' Rights Act, 1990:

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90b07>

Human Rights Code

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90h19>

Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1990:

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90m56>