



Accessibility Standard for Customer Service

Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities

Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities.

Assistive devices

We will ensure that our staff is trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods or services.

Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.s

Service animals

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public.

Support persons

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises. Fees will not be charged for support persons

We will notify customers of this through a notice posted on our premises and website.

Notice of temporary disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services at or facilities for customers with disabilities, Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. will notify customers promptly. This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. The notice will be placed at the front entrance to the store and posted on the website.

Training for staff

Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. will provide training to employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf of Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. Individuals in the following positions will be trained:

Order desk representatives, yard employees, drivers, salesmen and managers

This training will be provided to staff and all new employees hired within a two-week period of starting.

Training will include:

- An overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard
- Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc.'s plan related to the customer service standard.
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person.
- How to operate assistive device for the benefit to customers.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc.'s for goods and services. Staff will also be trained when changes are made to our plan on an annual basis.

Feedback process

Customers, who wish to provide feedback on the way out of Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. provides goods and services to people with disabilities can leave suggestions with the gate attendant, leave us a message on facebook/twitter, e-mail sales@hamiltonbuilders.ca. or verbally with the order desk.

All feedback will be directed to the Managers of the respected yards. Customers can expect to hear back within two working days. Complaints will be addressed according to our organization's regular complaint management procedures.

Modifications to this or other policies

Any policy of Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.



Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Procedure

Purpose Statement

This procedure addresses the accessibility requirements of Ontario Regulation 429/07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

Reasonable efforts shall be made to provide all persons, equal opportunity to obtain, use and benefit from Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. goods and services. To ensure that goods and services are provided in a manner and format that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities, the provision of such goods and services shall be:

1. part of standard business operations, whenever possible,
2. accessible through the use of assistive devices, service animals and support persons unless prohibited by law or for reasons of health and safety,
3. reinforced through training of personnel on accessibility requirements; provision of service disruption notification, when required and, access to a feedback process.

Scope

This procedure covers the provision of goods and services provided by Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. as well as by volunteers, agents or contractors (personnel) representing or performing any function on behalf of Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc.

Procedures

Assistive Devices, Service Animals, Support Persons

Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. shall recognize and accommodate persons requiring the use of assistive devices, service animals and support persons to access goods and services in accordance with applicable legislation, policy and procedures.

Assistive Devices

The use of assistive devices by individuals as required, in accessing goods and/or

services provided by Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. is recognized unless otherwise prohibited due to health and safety or privacy issues. Where possible, Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. shall make assistive devices available in the form of lifts, wheelchairs, audio and visual enhancements, etc.)

Service Animals

The accompaniment of service animals in areas/premises that is open to the public, when accessing goods and services provided by Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. is recognized unless otherwise prohibited by law.

In the event that a service animal is excluded from the premises by law, the appropriate personnel shall endeavor to make other provisions available, to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. goods and services.

Support Persons

The need for a support person to support and assist an individual with a disability when accessing goods and services provided by Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. is recognized. Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. shall ensure that both persons are permitted to enter the premises together and the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the support person while on the premises (O. Reg. 429/07, s 4 (4)).

Training, Service Disruption Notification, and Feedback Process

Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. shall provide:

1. accessibility training in accordance with this procedure and any related **Human Resource** training practices and procedures
2. notification in accordance with this procedure and the Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. Public Notice Policy and any other related legislation
3. a feedback process on the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities.

Training

Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. shall provide training to all staff, volunteers, agents/contractors and any other individuals who interact with the public or other third parties on behalf of Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. Training shall be commensurate with the level of public contact and shall include:

1. The purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07
2. How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
3. How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
4. How to use assistive devices, if applicable. Instruction if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing the

Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. goods and services

Training shall be provided on an as needed basis (for example training on the use of assistive equipment shall be upon hire or the first week of employment/use; whereas customer service training shall be provided in accordance with the Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. **Human Resource training schedule**).

Training shall be provided in a timely manner and on an ongoing basis to meet staff needs and to ensure compliance with applicable legislation.

Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. policies and procedures are available on the Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. safety board. The appropriate policy and procedures shall be reviewed as part of the training program.

Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. shall keep records of the training provided in accordance with Ontario Regulation 429/07.

Service Disruption Notification

In the event of a planned service disruption at any Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. facility, service or system notice shall be provided on the Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. website and posted at the location. Where a person with a disability uses such a facility, service or system, and, has registered a contact name and information with the Accessibility Program Coordinator, the contact person shall receive notice (in the manner determined at the time of registration) of the service disruption. Notice may be provided by one of the following ways:

- by telephone, or
- by email, or
- by mail

The registered contact person shall be provided notice about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities, services or systems that may be available.

In the event of an unexpected disruption, where possible notice shall be posted at the facility or service location in a conspicuous place, or posted on the Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. web site or by such other method as is reasonable under the circumstances.

Feedback Process

Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. shall maintain a feedback form to enable members of the public to comment on the provision of goods and services to people with disabilities. Such feedback shall be received in any form (i.e. in-person, by telephone (TTY), in writing, fax or in electronic format, including email, facebook and twitter). All questions and concerns received shall be acknowledged within a maximum of two days from the date of receipt. Response time to such submissions shall be dependent on the complexity of the issue, but shall not exceed 15 business days, unless there are extenuating circumstances that have been communicated to the submitter.

Definitions

Assistive Device - is a technical aid, communication device, or medical aid modified or customized that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. An assistive device may be provided by the individual or may be provided by Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. in the form of lifts, ramps, wheelchair, audio and visual enhancements, etc.

Barrier - as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

Disability - as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the Ontario Human Rights Code, is:

1. 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,
2. a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
3. a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
4. a mental disorder, or
5. 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 - As reflected in Ontario Regulation 429/07 - an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or if the person provides a letter

from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

Support Person - As reflected in Ontario Regulation 429/07 - a support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

Responsibilities

All Departments are responsible for:

- Providing documents in a suitable formats upon request by a person with a disability
- Ensuring compliance with the Standards of Accessible Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07
- Notifying the **Human Resources Department** of any additional training requirements.
- Budgeting for accessibility requirements
- Communicating and coordinating, when applicable, with a person with a disability regarding the use of a support person.
- Communicating and coordinating, when applicable, with a person with a disability regarding services animals.
- Providing notification of a service disruption to those persons that have registered with the Accessibility Program Coordinator

User (Person with a disability) is responsible for:

- Supervising and keeping service animals in control when used to access the Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. goods and services.
- Providing verification or license of service animal certification
- Providing Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc. with a contact name and information should service disruption notification be required

The Accessibility Program Coordinator is responsible for:

- Monitoring and reporting on compliance measures
- Updating and interpreting this procedure
- Communicating the accessible customer service procedures to all relevant parties
- Assisting in the set-up of training and the records to be kept by Hamilton Builders' Supply Inc.
- Maintain a contact list of individuals that have registered for service disruption notification

The Human Resources Department is responsible for:

- The provision of Accessibility Training in accordance with the relevant policies and procedures

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Training

Unit 1: Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

In this unit, you will learn:

- About the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

What is the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act?

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is a law in Ontario that allows the government to develop specific standards of accessibility and to enforce them.

AODA Section 1.

Recognizing the history of discrimination against persons with disabilities in Ontario, the purpose of this Act is to benefit all Ontarians by:

- a. developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025; and
- b. providing for the involvement of persons with disabilities, the Government of Ontario and of representatives of industries and various sectors of the economy in the development of accessibility standards.

The standards require the people or organizations identified in the standard to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities in key areas of daily living. Barriers keep people with disabilities from fully participating in activities that most of us take for granted. The customer service standard is the first standard to come into effect under the AODA.

The Government of Ontario is working with different standards development committees to develop other standards in the areas of transportation, information and communications, the built environment and employment. These committees include people with disabilities or their representatives, business owners, government representatives and members of the public.

The standards development committees propose standards for government consideration and the government may adopt them by regulation. Once adopted by regulation, the standards will impose requirements to make these areas more accessible to people with disabilities. They may apply to private and public sector organizations across Ontario.

Who are people with disabilities?

When we think of disabilities, we tend to think of people who use wheelchairs and who have physical disabilities that are visible and obvious. But disabilities can also be invisible. We cannot always tell who has a disability. The AODA uses the same definition of “disability” as the Ontario Human Rights Code.

AODA Section 2.

In this Act, “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 coordination, 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.

For more information about the Ontario Human Rights Code, visit:

www.ohrc.on.ca, and click on “The Code” under the Resources Section of the website.

What are barriers?

When you think about accessibility, it is important to be aware of both visible and invisible barriers. A barrier is anything that keeps someone with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their disability.

Attitude is perhaps the most difficult barrier to overcome because it’s hard to change the way people think or behave. Some people don’t know how to communicate with those who have visible or invisible disabilities – for example, assuming someone with a speech problem has intellectual limitations and

speaking to them in a manner that would be used with a child; or forming ideas about the person because of stereotypes or a lack of understanding. Some people may feel that they could offend the individual with a disability by offering help, or they ignore or avoid people with disabilities altogether. Remember, attitude is a major barrier that's within our power to change.

Architectural or structural barriers may result from design elements of a building such as stairs, doorways, the width of hallways and even room layout. **Information and communication** barriers can make it difficult for people to receive or convey information. For example, a person who is Deaf cannot communicate via standard telephone. Things like small print size, low colour contrast between text and background, confusing design of printed materials and the use of language that isn't clear or easy to understand can all cause difficulty. **Technology**, or lack of it, can prevent people from accessing information. Everyday tools like computers, telephones and other aids can all present barriers if they are not set up or designed with accessibility in mind.

Systemic barriers can result from an organization's policies, practices and procedures if they restrict people with disabilities, often unintentionally – for example, a clothing store with a “no refund” policy and no way for someone in a scooter to enter the change room.

Unit 2: The Customer Service Standard

In this unit, you will learn:

- What the customer service standard is
- Who has to comply with the customer service standard
- What all providers have to do to comply
- What additional requirements apply to some providers.

What is the customer service standard?

Ontario's accessible customer service standard is now the law. It came into force on January 1, 2008. People, businesses and other organizations that provide goods or services to the public or to other businesses or organizations in Ontario (“providers”) have legal obligations under the standard. The standard is aimed at making their customer service operations accessible to people with disabilities. The customer service standard is the first of five standards that will help lead the way to an accessible Ontario by 2025.

Who has to comply with the customer service standard?

The standard applies to all people or organizations, both public and private, that:

- Provide goods or services either directly to the public or to other businesses or organizations, and
- Have one or more employees in Ontario.

Providers in the following sectors are affected:

- Private
- Non-profit, and
- Public, including provincial and municipal governments, universities, colleges, hospitals, school boards and public transportation organizations.

What do all providers have to do to comply?

The following is a summary of requirements. There are more details of the requirements in the [Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07](#).

Providers must:

- Establish policies, practices and procedures on providing goods or services to people with disabilities.
- Make reasonable efforts to ensure that policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.
- Have a policy dealing with people's use of their own assistive devices to access goods or services or any other measures the organization offers to enable an individual access the goods or services.
- Communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account their disability.
- Let people with disabilities bring their service animals onto the parts of the premises open to the public or other third parties, except where the animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises.
- Let people with disabilities be accompanied by their support persons while on the parts of the provider's premises open to the public or other third parties.
- If a provider charges admission, let people know ahead of time what, if any, admission will be charged for a support person.
- Provide notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities usually use to access goods or services are temporarily disrupted.
- Train anyone who interacts with the public or other third parties on the provider's behalf on topics outlined in the customer service standard.
- Train anyone who is involved in developing the provider's customer service policies, practices and procedures on topics outlined in the customer service standard.

- Establish a process for receiving and responding to feedback about the way the organization provides goods or services to people with disabilities, including the actions to be taken if a complaint is received, and make information about the process readily available to the public.

What additional requirements apply to some providers?

Designated public sector organizations and other providers with 20 or more employees must:

- Document in writing all their policies, practices and procedures for providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities
- Let customers know that the documents are available upon request
- Upon request, provide the documented information to a person with a disability in a format that takes into account their disability.

Unit 3: How to interact and communicate with customers who have disabilities

In this unit, you will learn:

- General tips on providing service to customers with disabilities
- Tips on how to interact and communicate with customers:
 - Who have vision loss
 - Who are Deaf, deafened, oral deaf or hard of hearing
 - Who are deafblind
 - Who have physical disabilities
 - Who have mental health disabilities
 - Who have intellectual or developmental disabilities
 - Who have learning disabilities
 - Who have speech or language impairments.
- Tips if you visit or deliver to your customers with disabilities at home
- Tips if you talk to customers with disabilities on the telephone.

General tips on providing service to customers with disabilities

- If you're not sure what to do, ask your customer, "May I help you?" Your customers with disabilities know if they need help and how you can provide it.
- Speak directly to the person with a disability, not to his or her support person or companion.

- Avoid stereotypes and make no assumptions about what type of disability or disabilities the person has. Some disabilities are not visible and customers are not required to give you information about any disabilities they may have.
- Take the time to get to know your customer's needs and focus on meeting those needs just as you would with any other customer.
- Be patient. People with some kinds of disabilities may take a little longer to understand and respond. A good start is to listen carefully.
- Make an effort to learn about appropriate language and terminology to use when referring to people with disabilities. For more information, see [Appendix B](#).
- If you cannot understand what your customer is saying, politely ask them to repeat themselves.
- Don't touch or speak to service animals – they are working and have to pay attention at all times.
- Don't touch assistive devices, including wheelchairs, without permission.
- Consider offering interactive devices (such as self-serve checkouts, direct payment devices) that can be used by people with various types of disabilities or offering alternate services.
- Consider including people with disabilities in the testing or evaluation of your communication services.

Tips on how to interact and communicate with customers who have vision loss

Vision loss reduces a person's ability to see clearly. Few people with vision loss are totally blind. Many have limited vision such as tunnel vision, where a person has a loss of peripheral or side vision, or a lack of central vision, which means they cannot see straight ahead. Some people can see the outline of objects while others can see the direction of light.

Vision loss can restrict your customers' abilities to read signs, locate landmarks or see hazards. Some of these customers may use a guide dog or white cane, but others may not. Sometimes it may be difficult to tell if a person has vision loss.

Types of assistance your customer might use:

- Braille
- Large print
- Magnification devices
- White cane
- Guide dog
- Support person such as a sighted guide.

There is more information on assistive devices, service animals and support persons in Units [4](#), [5](#), [6](#) and [7](#).

General Tips

- Don't assume the individual can't see you.
- Don't touch your customer without asking permission.
- Offer your elbow to guide the person. If he or she accepts, walk slowly, but wait for permission before doing so. Lead – don't pull. See [Appendix C](#) for tips on guiding a customer who has vision loss.
- Identify landmarks or other details to orient your customer to the environment around him or her.
- Don't touch or speak to service animals – they are working and have to pay attention at all times.
- Don't leave your customer in the middle of a room. Show him or her to a chair, or guide them to a comfortable location.
- If you need to leave your customer, let him or her know you are leaving and will be back.
- Identify yourself when you approach your customer and speak directly to him or her, even if he/she is accompanied by a companion.
- There is generally no need to raise your voice because the person does not necessarily have hearing loss. Say your name even if you know the person well as many voices sound similar.
- Be clear and precise when giving directions, e.g., two steps behind you, a metre to your left, etc. Don't use “over there” or point in the direction.
- If you're uncertain about how to provide directions, ask the person how to do so.
- Do not be afraid or embarrassed to use words such as “see”, “read” and “look.” People with vision loss also use these words.
- When providing printed information, offer to read or summarize it.
- Offer to describe information. For example, verbally itemize the bill or explain what the specials are or what is on the menu.

Tips on how to interact and communicate with customers who are Deaf, oral deaf, deafened or hard of hearing,

People who have hearing loss may be Deaf, oral deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.

- People who are profoundly deaf may identify themselves as culturally Deaf or oral deaf. In Deaf culture, indicated by a capital “D,” the term is used to describe a person who has severe to profound hearing loss, with little or no hearing.
- Oral deaf is a term describing a person who was born deaf or became deaf before learning to speak, but is taught to speak and may not typically use American Sign Language.
- The term “deafened” describes a person who has lost their hearing slowly or suddenly in adulthood. The person may use speech with visual cues such as captioning or computerized note-taking, speechreading or sign language.

- The term “hard of hearing” describes a person who uses their residual hearing (hearing that remains) and speech to communicate. The person may supplement communication by speechreading, hearing aids, sign language and/or communication devices.

Types of assistance your customer might use:

- Hearing aid
- Paper and pen
- Personal amplification device (e.g., Pocket Talker)
- Phone amplifier
- Relay Service
- Teletypewriter (TTY)
- Hearing ear dog
- Support person such as a sign language interpreter.

General Tips

- Attract the customer’s attention before speaking. Generally, the best way is by a gentle touch on the shoulder or with a gentle wave of your hand.
- Ask how you can help. Don’t shout.
- Move to a well-lit area, if available, where your customer can see your face.
- Don’t put your hands in front of your face when speaking. Some people read lips.
- If necessary, ask if another method of communicating would be easier, for example, using a pen and paper.
- Be patient if you are using a pen and paper to communicate. American Sign Language may be your customer’s first language. It has its own grammatical rules and sentence structure.
- Look at and speak directly to your customer. Address your customer, not the interpreter or support person.
- Be clear and precise when giving directions, and repeat or rephrase if necessary. Confirm that your customer understands you.
- If the person uses a hearing aid, reduce background noise or move to a quieter area, if possible, so the person can hear or concentrate better.
- Don’t assume that the customer knows sign language or reads lips.

Tips on how to interact and communicate with customers who are deafblind

A person who is deafblind can neither see nor hear to some degree. This results in difficulties in accessing information and managing daily activities. Many people who are deafblind will be accompanied by an intervenor, a professional who helps with communicating.

Types of assistance your customer might use:

- Braille
- Large print
- Print on paper (using black felt marker on non-glossy white paper or using portable white and black boards)
- Communication boards
- Hearing aid with built-in FM system
- Magnification equipment such as monocular or magnifier
- Teletypewriter (TTY)
- White cane
- Service animal
- Support person, such as an intervenor.

General Tips

- Don't assume what a person can or cannot do. Some people who are deafblind have some sight or hearing, while others have neither.
- A customer who is deafblind is likely to explain to you how to communicate with him or her or give you an assistance card or a note explaining how to communicate with him or her.
- Identify yourself to the intervenor when you approach your customer who is deafblind, but then speak directly to your customer as you normally would, not to the intervenor.
- Don't touch or address service animals – they are working and have to pay attention at all times.
- Don't suddenly touch a person who is deafblind or touch them without permission.

Tips on how to interact and communicate with customers who have physical disabilities

There are many types and degrees of physical disabilities, and not all require a wheelchair. People who have arthritis, heart or lung conditions or amputations may also have difficulty with moving, standing or sitting. It may be difficult to identify a person with a physical disability.

Types of assistance your customer might use:

- Elevator
- Mobility device (i.e., wheelchair, scooter, walker, cane, crutches)
- Support person.

General Tips

- Speak naturally and directly to your customer, not to his or her companion or support person.
- If you need to have a lengthy conversation with someone in a wheelchair or scooter, consider sitting so that you can make eye contact.
- Ask before you help. People with physical disabilities often have their own ways of doing things.
- Respect your customer's personal space. Do not lean over him or her or on his or her assistive device.
- Don't move items or equipment, such as canes and walkers, out of the person's reach.
- Don't touch assistive devices without permission. If you have permission to move a person in a wheelchair, remember to:
 - Wait for and follow the person's instructions
 - Confirm that your customer is ready to move
 - Describe what you're going to do before you do it
 - Avoid uneven ground and objects
 - Don't leave the person in an awkward, dangerous or undignified position such as facing a wall or in the path of opening doors.
- Let your customer know about accessible features in the immediate area (i.e., automatic doors, accessible washrooms, elevators, ramps, etc.).

Tips on how to interact and communicate with customers who have mental health disabilities

Mental health disabilities are not as visible as many other types of disabilities. You may not know that your customer has a mental health disability unless you're informed of it.

Examples of mental health disabilities include schizophrenia, depression, phobias, as well as bipolar, anxiety and mood disorders.

A person with a mental health disability may have difficulty with one, several or none of these:

- Inability to think clearly
- Hallucinations (e.g., hearing voices, seeing or feeling things that aren't there)
- Depression or acute mood swings (e.g., from happy to depressed with no apparent reason for the change)
- Poor concentration

- Difficulty remembering
- Apparent lack of motivation.

If someone is experiencing difficulty controlling his or her symptoms, or is in a crisis, you may want to help out. Be calm and professional and ask your customer how you can best help.

Types of assistance your customer might use:

- Service animal
- Support person.

General Tips

- Treat a person with a mental health disability with the same respect and consideration you have for everyone else.
- Be patient.
- Be confident and reassuring. Listen carefully and work with your customer to try to meet their needs.
- If someone appears to be in a crisis, ask him or her to tell you the best way to help.

Tips on how to interact and communicate with customers who have intellectual or developmental disabilities

People with intellectual or developmental disabilities may have difficulty doing many things most of us take for granted. These disabilities can mildly or profoundly limit the person's ability to learn, communicate, socialize and take care of their everyday needs. You may not know that someone has this type of disability unless you are told.

As much as possible, treat your customers with an intellectual or developmental disability like anyone else. They may understand more than you think, and they will appreciate that you treat them with respect.

Types of assistance your customer might use:

- Communication board
- Speech generating device
- Service animal
- Support person.

General Tips

- Don't assume what a person can or cannot do.

- Use plain language and speak in short sentences.
- To confirm if your customer understands what you have said, consider asking the person to repeat the message back to you in his or her own words.
- If you cannot understand what is being said, simply ask again.
- Provide one piece of information at a time.
- Be supportive and patient.
- Speak directly to your customer, not to their companion or support person.

Tips on how to interact and communicate with customers who have learning disabilities

The term “learning disability” describes a range of information processing disorders that can affect how a person acquires, organizes, expresses, retains, understands or uses verbal or non-verbal information.

Examples include dyslexia (problems in reading and related language-based learning); dyscalculia (problems in mathematics); and dysgraphia (problems in writing and fine motor skills).

It is important to know that having a learning disability does not mean a person is incapable of learning. Rather, it means they learn in a different way.

Learning disabilities can result in different communication difficulties for people. They can be subtle, such as difficulty reading, or more pronounced. They can interfere with your customer’s ability to receive, express or process information. You may not know that a person has a learning disability unless you are told.

Types of assistance your customer might use:

- Alternative technology for writing
- Calculator
- Scanning or reading technology
- Tape recorders, mini pocket recorders.

General Tips

- When you know someone with a learning disability needs help, ask how you can help.
- Speak naturally, clearly, and directly to your customer.
- Allow extra time if necessary – people may take a little longer to understand and respond.
- Remember to communicate in a way that takes into account the customer’s disability.
- Be patient and be willing to explain something again, if needed.

Tips on how to interact and communicate with customers who have speech or language impairments

Some people have problems communicating because of their disability. Cerebral palsy, hearing loss or other conditions may make it difficult to pronounce words or may cause slurring or stuttering. They also may prevent the person from expressing themselves or prevent them from understanding written or spoken language. Some people who have severe difficulties may use communication boards or other assistive devices.

Types of assistance your customer might use:

- Communication board
- Paper and pen
- Speech generating device
- Support person.

General Tips

- Don't assume that because a person has one disability, they also have another. For example, if a customer has difficulty speaking, it doesn't mean they have an intellectual or developmental disability as well.
- Ask your customer to repeat the information if you don't understand.
- Ask questions that can be answered "yes" or "no" if possible.
- Try to allow enough time to communicate with your customer as they may speak more slowly.
- Don't interrupt or finish your customer's sentences. Wait for them to finish.

Tips on at-home service and personal delivery to customers with disabilities

- Confirm the details of your arrival time in advance. Don't arrive unexpectedly.
- Be patient. You may need to wait a few moments for your customer to open the door.
- Introduce yourself clearly. Some customers may not be able to read identification cards and may want you to use a password. Check before you visit.
- Keep your customer informed of what you're doing.
- If you need to move some of your customer's possessions, make sure that you leave the house exactly as it was when you arrived. For example, someone with

vision loss will expect that their furniture is in the same place and could trip if you've moved the sofa.

- If you cannot complete the job, clearly explain what will happen next. Make another appointment, and leave contact information in case there are problems or questions arise.

Tips on talking to customers with disabilities over the phone

- Speak naturally, clearly and directly.
- Don't worry about how the person's voice sounds. Concentrate on what they are saying.
- Don't interrupt or finish your customer's sentences. Give your customer time to explain or respond.
- If you don't understand, simply ask again, or repeat or rephrase what you heard and ask if you have understood correctly.
- If a telephone customer is using an interpreter or a Relay Service, speak naturally to the customer, not to the interpreter.
- If you encounter a situation where, after numerous attempts, you and your customer cannot communicate with each other due to the customer's disability, consider making alternate arrangements.

Unit 4: Assistive Devices

In this unit, you will learn:

- What an assistive device is
- About some commonly used assistive devices
- How to interact with a customer who uses an assistive device

What is an assistive device?

An assistive device is a tool, technology or other mechanism that enables a person with a disability to do everyday tasks and activities such as moving, communicating or lifting. It helps the person to maintain their independence at home, at work and in the community.

What are some commonly used assistive devices?

There are a variety of assistive devices that some of your customers may use, depending on their disability. Many will be personal assistive devices, meaning

they are owned and brought along by the individual, while others may be provided by your organization. The following are examples of some devices you may come across when serving your customers with disabilities:

People who have vision loss

- Digital audio player – enables people to listen to books, directions, art shows, etc.
- Magnifier – makes print and images larger and easier to read
- Portable global positioning systems (GPS) – helps orient people to get to specific destinations
- White cane – helps people find their way around obstacles

People who are Deaf, deafened, oral deaf, hard of hearing

- FM transmitter system or other amplification devices – boosts sound closest to the listener while reducing background noise
- Hearing aid – makes sound louder and clearer
- Teletypewriter (TTY) – helps people who are unable to speak or hear to communicate by phone. The person types their messages on the TTY keyboard and messages are sent using telephone lines to someone who has a TTY, or to an operator (Bell Relay Service) who passes the message to someone who doesn't have a TTY.

People who have physical disabilities

- Mobility device (e.g., a wheelchair, scooter, walker, cane, crutches) – helps people who have difficulty walking
- Personal oxygen tank – helps people breathe

People who have learning disabilities

- Electronic notebook or laptop computer – used to take notes and to communicate
- Personal data managers – stores, organizes and retrieves personal information
- Mini pocket recorders – records information for future playback

People who have intellectual/developmental disabilities

- Communication boards (e.g., a Bliss board) – used to pass on a message by pointing to symbols, words or pictures
- Speech generating devices – used to pass on a message using a device that “speaks” when a symbol, word or picture is pressed.

How do I interact with a customer who uses an assistive device?

- Many customers with disabilities will have their own personal assistive devices, such as wheelchairs, scooters or walkers. Don't touch or handle an assistive device without permission.
- If you have permission to move a person in a wheelchair remember to:
 - Wait for and follow the person's instructions.
 - Confirm that your customer is ready to move.
 - Describe what you are going to do before you do it.
 - Try to avoid uneven ground and objects.
 - Don't leave the person in an awkward, dangerous or undignified position such as facing a wall or in the path of opening doors.
- Don't move items or equipment, such as canes and walkers, out of your customer's reach.
- Respect your customer's personal space. Don't lean over him or her or on his or her assistive device.
- Let your customer know about accessible features in the immediate environment (e.g., automatic doors, accessible washrooms, etc.).

Unit 5: Using assistive devices when providing goods and services to a person with a disability

In this unit, you will learn:

- About some assistive devices that may be provided by your business or organization
- What training is required on equipment and assistive devices
- How to communicate using a Teletypewriter (TTY) and Relay Service.

Assistive devices that may be provided by your business or organization

- Accessible interactive kiosks
- Adjustable desk/workstation – changes the height or tilt of a writing surface
- Automatic door opener
- Elevator
- Lift – raises or lowers people who use mobility devices
- Mobility devices such as a manual wheelchair, a motorized scooter or shopping cart
- Teletypewriter (TTY).

Training on equipment or assistive devices

Your organization is required to ensure people designated in the standard receive training on how to use equipment or assistive devices that your organization offers to customers with disabilities. The assistive devices your organization provides likely come with instruction manuals. The following information may be helpful to staff who need to use a TTY and Bell Relay Service to communicate with customers.

Communicating using a TTY and Bell Relay Service

A teletypewriter (TTY) is a device that allows users to send typed messages across phone lines. Many people who are Deaf, oral deaf, deafened, hard of hearing or deafblind use TTYs to call other individuals.

This device generally has a keyboard and display that lets the user send and receive typed messages over telephone lines. People who are deafblind may use an additional large print or braille display to read the typed messages.

A stand-alone TTY must communicate with another TTY. TTY users can directly call other TTY numbers or they can call a Relay Service. The Bell Relay Service number is 1-800-855-0511. The Relay Service operator will receive the messages on a TTY and relay the messages, by standard phone, to a person who does not have a TTY. A standard phone user can also place a call through the Relay Service operator to a TTY user.

Unit 6: Service Animals

In this unit, you will learn:

- What guide dogs and service animals are and how to interact with a customer who uses a service animal.

Guide dogs and other service animals

What is a service animal?

Think of a service animal as an animal with a job to do for a person with a disability. Examples include guide dogs and animals trained to alert an individual to an oncoming seizure and lead them to safety.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 refers to the definition of “guide dog” under the Blind Persons’ Rights Act, which states that: a guide dog

is a dog that has been trained as a guide for a blind person at one of the facilities listed in Ontario Regulation 58 under the Blind Persons' Rights Act. The Ministry of the Attorney General may issue identification cards to identify a person who is blind and his or her guide dog.

The customer service standard requires you to let people with disabilities use their service animals on the parts of your premises open to the public or to third parties unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises.

Under the standard, an animal is a service animal if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability, or if the person has a letter from a physician or nurse verifying that the animal is required for reasons relating to his or her disability. If it is not obvious that the animal is a service animal, you are not required to allow the animal on your premises if the person does not have a letter from a physician or nurse, or an identification card from the Ministry of the Attorney General.

The following chart lists some types of service animals, key tasks they perform and those who use service animals.

Service Animal	Key Tasks	Users
Autism assistance or service dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeps a child from running into danger and provides assistance when sensory stimulus is heightened. Dog is attached to the child's waist by a belt and a leash held by an adult 	People with autism or other developmental/intellectual disabilities

Guide dog, dog guide or seeing eye dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows directions of owner, alerts owner to changes in elevation (e.g., curbs, stairs) and obstacles 	People with vision loss
Hearing ear, hearing, sound alert or hearing alert dog, cat or animal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alerts owner to sounds often by a nudge or pawing and leads him/her to the source of the sound. May use a special signal to alert owner to fire alarm 	People who are Deaf, oral deaf, deafened or hard of hearing
Psychiatric service dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retrieves and prompts the person to take medicine, retrieves or activates medical alert, leads person out of crowds, etc. 	People with mental health disabilities
Service or mobility dog or animal, special skills dog or animal (Small ponies or miniature horses are used but are not as common).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May pull wheelchairs, carry objects, pull items, turn handles or push buttons such as door openers. Larger dogs may provide balance support. 	People with physical disabilities
Seizure, seizure alert, seizure assist or seizure response dog or animal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steers owner from danger during a seizure, activates medical alert Can alert owner to an oncoming seizure 	People who have epilepsy or other seizure disorders

The standard doesn't require that service animals be formally trained, but most service animals in Ontario are trained at organizations in Canada or in the United States. Service animals are used in many countries around the world and so visitors to Ontario may also use service animals.

Tips on interacting with a customer who uses a service animal

- Remember that a service animal is not a pet. It is a working animal.
- Avoid touching or addressing service animals – they are working and have to pay attention at all times.
- Avoid making assumptions about the animal. Not all service animals wear special collars or harnesses. If you're not sure if the animal is a pet or a service animal, ask your customer.

- Remember your customer is responsible for the care and supervision of their service animal. You are not expected to provide care or food for the animal. However, you could provide water for the animal if your customer requests it.

How do I serve a customer if their animal is not allowed because of another law?

Where an animal is excluded by law from your premises, consider explaining why the animal is excluded. Explore or discuss with your customer another way of providing goods or services. For example:

- Bring goods or services to the person in a part of your premises where the animal is not restricted.
- Offer a safe location where the service animal can wait, if the person is able to be separated from the animal while obtaining the service, and offer assistance to the person with a disability while he or she is separated from the service animal.

Unit 7: Support Persons

In this unit, you will learn:

- Who are support persons and how to interact with a customer who has a support person with them.

Support persons

Who is a support person?

A support person is an individual hired or chosen to accompany a person with a disability to provide services or assistance with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to goods or services.

Personal care needs may include, but are not limited to, assistance with eating or using the washroom. Medical needs may include, but are not limited to, monitoring someone's health conditions, providing injections and providing support when someone has moderate to severe seizures.

The support person can be a paid personal support worker, volunteer, a friend or a family member. He or she does not necessarily need to have special training or qualifications.

Customers with disabilities must be allowed to use their support persons while accessing your organization's goods or services on the parts of the premises

open to the public or third parties. If your organization charges for admission, you are required to have a policy regarding what amount, if any, is charged for support persons. Advance notification of a fee, if any, is required.

Functions of support persons

The following chart contains some examples of functions performed by support persons:

Person with a Disability	Support Person's Functions
Person who is deafblind	To guide, to provide transportation and adaptive communication such as tactile or adapted American Sign language, large print notes, print on palm or two-handed manual signing
Person who is Deaf, deafened, oral deaf	To provide sign language or oral interpretation services – to translate conversation, not to participate in it
Person with a learning disability	To help with complex communication or note-taking
Person with an intellectual/developmental disability	To help with travel, daily activities, prompting medication, complex tasks, or to keep them from dangerous situations
Person with a mental health disability	To help with communication tasks such as completing complex forms. To help in environments such as crowded, noisy settings or high-stress situations such as interviews
Person with a physical disability	To provide services related to traveling, personal care such as toileting or eating, monitoring medical conditions
Person with a seizure disorder	To assist in the event of a seizure, e.g. to protect the individual from falls
Person with a speech impairment who uses an augmentative or alternative communication system (symbol board, electronic communication system)	To relay or interpret a person's communications

Tips on interacting with a customer who has a support person

- A customer with a disability might not introduce their support person. If you are not sure which person is the customer, take your lead from the person using or requesting your goods or services or simply ask.
- Once you have determined who your customer is, speak directly to them, not to their support person.
- Be familiar with your organization's policies, practices and procedures about providing accessible customer service.

Unit 8: What to do if a customer with a disability is having difficulty accessing goods or services

In this unit, you will learn:

- What you can do to help your customer access goods or services.

What can I do to help my customer access goods or services?

All customers have their own specific needs or preferences. Being positive, flexible and open to suggestions will help to create a good customer experience. A good starting point is to ask your customer how you can help them access your goods or services.

Often, good customer service for people with disabilities can be achieved through simple and effective solutions to challenges. For example:

- Your customer is in a wheelchair and cannot enter the coffee shop where you work because of a step at the door. You could offer to serve her at the door.
- Your customer is Deaf and does not have a sign language interpreter with him. Ask him, in writing, if using a pen and paper to communicate would be a good way to serve him.
- Your customer cannot access some of the products in the shop where you work because they are displayed on counters that are too high to reach from her scooter. Offer to bring the products to the customer who will be able to feel, see, touch or smell the goods herself and maintain her independence.

- The menu in the restaurant where you work cannot be read by your customer who has low vision. Offer to read it out to him.
- If your business does not have automatic door openers, be prepared to open the door.

Remember, your customers are your best source for information about their needs. Ask them what you can do to help them. They will likely appreciate your attention and consideration for their needs.



Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

1. Which of the following statements about the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is **false**?
 - a. Accessibility standards can apply to private and public sector organizations across Ontario.
 - b. The customer service standard is the only standard being developed under the AODA.
 - c. The government of Ontario is working with different standards development committees to develop other standards.
 - d. The goal of the AODA is to make Ontario accessible for people with disabilities by 2025.

2. Under the customer service standard, providers of goods and services must meet specific requirements. Which of the following is **not** a requirement?
 - a. Establish policies, practices and procedures on providing goods or services to people with disabilities.
 - b. Have a policy dealing with people's use of their own assistive devices to access goods or services, or the availability, if any, of other measures which would enable them to do so.
 - c. Train only managers and executives.
 - d. Accept feedback and have a process for receiving and responding to feedback about the way in which the organization provides goods or services to people with disabilities, including what action will be taken if a complaint is received.

3. Which of the following should you **not** do when serving a customer with a disability?
 - a. Speak directly to your customer, not to their support person or companion.
 - b. Grab the arm of your customer with vision loss and pull them to the check-out counter.
 - c. If your customer uses a hearing aid, reduce background noise or move to a quieter area.
 - d. Ask your customer to repeat information if you didn't understand the first time.

4. Which of the following should you **not** do when serving a customer who uses an assistive device, a service animal, or a support person?

- a. Speak directly to the customer.
- b. Pet a guide dog because he's so cute and you love animals.
- c. Request permission to move your customer's wheelchair.
- d. Be aware of how to use specific assistive devices offered by your organization.

Employee Signature

Date



Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

Quiz Answers

1. **b** is the correct answer
2. **c** is the correct answer
3. **b** is the correct answer
4. **b** is the correct answer