

Municipality of Oakland-Wawanesa

Policy & Procedure Manual

Policy

ADMIN006

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Subject: Accessible Customer Service	Pages: 1 of
Authority: Council	Effective Date:
Approved:	

TITLE: ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

MUNICIPAL COMMITMENT:

We are committed to complying with the [Accessibility Standard for Customer Service](#) under The Accessibility for Manitobans Act. Its policies, practices and measures reflect the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people of all abilities.

If a barrier to accessing municipal goods or services cannot be removed, we will seek to provide alternate ways to access the goods or services.

The following policy statements, organizational practices and measures are intended to meet the requirements of the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service.

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers and management working for or in conjunction with the Municipality or acting on its behalf.

1: Meet communication needs.

Policy Statement:

We meet the communication needs of our residents, customers and service recipients.

Practices and Measures:

To meet communication needs, when appropriate we will offer to communicate in different ways, such as writing things down, reading things out loud, and taking extra time to explain things.

We will also:

- keep paper and pens available to write things down
- have magnification tools available
- offer a chair when longer conversations are needed
- offer a quieter space
- sit down to engage with someone using a wheelchair

All of our publications include the statement: "This publication is available in alternate formats on request." We also specify how a person can request an alternate format.

We use signs and documents that are easy to read, including using larger fonts and colour contrast, and ensuring messages are not printed on images.

We write signs and documents in plain language.

2: Accommodate the use of assistive devices.

Policy Statement:

We accommodate the use of assistive devices when residents, customers and service recipients are accessing our goods, services or facilities.

Practices and Measures:

We do not touch or move residents, customers and service recipients' assistive devices without permission.

In cases where the assistive device presents significant and unavoidable health or safety concerns, we attempt to use other measures to ensure the person with disabilities can access our goods, services or facilities i.e. we will extinguish any open flames when serving a person with an oxygen tank.

3: Welcome support persons.

Policy Statement:

We welcome support persons.

Practices and Measures:

We address the residents, customers or service recipients, not the support person, unless requested by the residents, customers or service recipients to do otherwise.

We make space for support persons on-site and ensure residents, customers and service recipients have access to their support persons at all times.

4: Allow service animals.

Policy Statement:

We allow service animals on our premises.

Practices and Measures:

We:

treat a service animal as a working animal

do not distract a service animal from its job by petting, feeding or playing with it, unless given permission by the person with the service animal to do so

know how to identify a service animal by its harness or vest and by the assistance the animal is providing

If we have concerns, we may ask if the animal has been trained to help a person with a disability-related need.

We do not inquire about the disability.

We expect the person who is handling the service animal to maintain control of the animal physically or through voice, signal or other means.

If the service animal is showing signs of not being controlled (i.e., by barking, whining or wandering), we may provide a warning to the handler to control the animal.

If the service animal continues to misbehave, we may ask the handler to leave.

If another law prohibits service animals (e.g., sterile laboratories, and food preparation areas), we explain why the animal cannot enter the space and discuss with the person another way of providing goods or services.

5: Maintain accessibility features.

Policy Statement:

To ensure barrier-free access to our goods, services or facilities, we maintain our accessibility features so they can be used as intended.

Practices and Measures:

We organize our space so that there is room for people with wheelchairs, electric scooters and walkers.

Our seating accommodates people of varying sizes and abilities.

We keep hallways, aisles, entrance and reception areas, waiting rooms and meeting rooms clear of clutter.

We keep our entrance area clear of ice and snow.

We place standing signs out of the way to avoid tripping hazards.

We use both audio and visual cues to inform customers it is their turn to be served.

We take our goods and/or services to the residents, customers or service recipients when our premises and structures are not accessible.

Alternatives to our accessibility features include:

online services and videos

providing service at alternate locations, such as attending people's homes or satellite offices

Our accessibility features affected by this policy include hallways, aisles, entrance and reception areas, waiting rooms and meeting rooms.

6. Let the public know when and why an accessibility feature is unavailable.

Policy Statement:

We let the public know when and why an accessibility feature is temporarily unavailable, how long it will be unavailable, and other ways to access our goods and services.

Practices and Measures:

If one of our accessibility features becomes temporarily unavailable, we prepare and post a notice and/or announcement about the disruption, the reason for the disruption, how long it will last, and whether there are other ways we can provide access to our goods and services

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If requested, we work with the customer to find other ways to provide goods and services.

We let the public know about disruptions in the following ways:

by door-to-door distribution if time permits

by posting on the municipal website and at the municipal buildings

by posting notices at post office buildings and other high traffic areas

by Alert notification for those signed up for the application

7. Welcome and respond promptly to feedback.

Policy Statements:

We welcome and respond promptly to feedback we receive on the accessibility of our goods and services.

We document the actions we take to respond to the feedback we receive, and that information is available on request in a format that meets the individual's communication needs.

Practices and Measures:

We invite feedback in the following ways:

Visit our reception or service desk, or contact us by phone, email, website or feedback form

All feedback is directed to the Accessibility Coordinator at the Nesbitt Office or the Accessibility Committee Working Group, who determines what action, if any, should occur.

If the feedback requires us to follow-up, the resident, customer or service recipient is notified that the request is being reviewed and when they can expect a response.

We let the residents, customers or service recipients know what action we will take to address their feedback, if any.

We respond to feedback in a way that meets the communication needs of the individual.

8: Provide the required training to employees, volunteers and management.

Policy Statements:

We provide the required training on accessible customer service to employees, volunteers and management. We are trained on:

- How to interact and communicate with people who face barriers to accessing goods and services, use assistive devices, are assisted by a support person and/or are assisted by a service animal.
- How to use any equipment or assistive devices that are available on-site.
- An overview of The Accessibility for Manitobans Act, The Human Rights Code (Manitoba), and the Customer Service Standard.
- Our organizational policies, practices and measures, including updates or changes.

Practices and Measures:

We train new employees, volunteers and management within two weeks after hiring.

We provide refresher training regularly, including updates to policies, practices and measures. Training is offered every year or as required.

The Chief Administrative Officer records who has taken training and when.

Feedback on the accessibility of our goods and services is addressed in regular staff meetings.