



AODA Customer Service Policy

ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY

Effective Date: November 29, 2011

Intent

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07* under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 ("Regulation 429/07")*, and applies to the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties.

All goods and services provided by the Company shall follow the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

Scope

- a) This policy applies to the provision of goods and services at premises owned and operated by the Company.
- b) This policy applies to employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractors who deal with the public or other third parties and act on behalf of the Company, including when the provision of goods and services occurs off Company premises, including but not limited to delivery services, call centers, panelists, vendors, drivers, catering and third party marketing agencies.
- c) The section of this policy that addresses the use of guide dogs and service animals only applies to the provision of goods and services that take place at premises owned and operated by the Company.
- d) This policy also apply to all persons who participate in the development of the Company's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to members of the public or third parties.

Definitions

Assistive Device – is a technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that customers bring with them such as a wheelchair, walker or a personal oxygen tank that might assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering and/or reading.

Disability – the term disability as defined by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and the *Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990* refers to:

- 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;
- a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- a learning disability, or dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- a mental disorder; or
- 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 – is a highly-trained working dog that has been trained at one of the facilities listed in *Ontario Regulation 58* under the *Blind Persons' Rights Act, 1990* to provide mobility, safety and increased independence for people who are blind.

Service Animal – as reflected in *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.

Service Dog – as reflected in *Ontario Regulation 562* of the *Health Protection and Promotion Act, 1990*, a dog other than a guide dog for the blind is a service dog if:

- it is readily apparent to an average person that the dog functions as a service dog for a person with a medical disability;
- or the person who requires the dog can provide on request a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires a service dog.

Support Person – as reflected in *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, medical needs or access to goods and services.

General Principles

In accordance with the *Regulation 429/07*, this policy addresses the following:

- A. The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities;
- B. The Use of Assistive Devices
- C. The Use of Guide Dogs, Service Animals and Service Dogs
- D. The Use of Support Persons
- E. Notice of Service Disruptions
- F. Customer Feedback
- G. Training
- H. Notice of Availability and Format of Required Documents

A. The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities

The Company will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity by:

- ensuring that all customers receive equal opportunity to obtain, use and benefit from the Company's goods and services;
- allowing customers with both visible and non-visible disabilities to access goods and services in a manner that accommodates their individual needs so long as this does not present a safety risk;
- using alternative methods, where possible, to ensure that customers with both visible and non-visible disabilities have access to the same services, in the same place and in the same or similar manner; and
- communicating in a manner that takes into account the customer's disability.

B. Assistive Devices

Customer's own assistive device(s):

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing goods or services provided by the Company.

In cases where the assistive device presents a safety concern or where accessibility might be an issue, other reasonable measures will be used to ensure equal access of goods and services. For example, open flames and oxygen tanks cannot be near one another. Therefore, the accommodation of a customer with an oxygen tank may involve ensuring the customer is in a location that would be considered safe for both the customer and the business.

A further example would be where use of an elevator is available and an individual requires

an assistive device for the purposes of mobility, service will be provided in a location that meets the needs of the customer.

C. Guide Dogs and Service Animals

Customers with disabilities that are accompanied by a guide dog, service animal or service dog will be allowed access to the Company premises that are open to the public and will be allowed to keep the animal with him or her unless otherwise excluded by law. "No pet" policies do not apply to guide dogs or service animals.

Food Service Areas:

Customers with disabilities that are accompanied by guide dog will be allowed access to food service areas that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law.

Other types of service animals are not permitted into food service areas according to Section 60 of *Ontario Regulation 562, Health Protection and Promotion Act, 1990*.

Exclusion Guidelines:

If a guide dog, service animal or service dog is excluded by law, (see applicable laws below) the Company will offer alternative methods to enable persons with disabilities to access goods and services, where possible (for example, securing the animal in a safe location and offering the guidance of an employee).

Recognizing a Guide Dog, Service Dog or Service Animal:

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used by the customer for reasons relating to his or her disability, the Company may request verification from the customer.

Verification may include:

- a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons related to the disability;
- a valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada; or,
- a certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school.

Care and Control of the Animal:

A customer that is accompanied by a guide dog, service dog or service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all times.

Allergies:

If a health and safety concern presents itself, such as a severe allergy to the animal, the Company will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals affected.

D. Support Persons

If customers with disabilities are accompanied by a support person, the Company will ensure that both people are allowed to enter the premises together and that the customer is not prevented from having access to the support person.

There may be times where seating and availability prevent the customer and support person from sitting beside one another. In these situations, the Company will make every reasonable attempt to resolve the issue.

In situations where confidential information might be discussed, consent will be obtained from the customer, prior to the discussion.

Admission Fees:

If payment is required by a support person for admission to the Company premises, the Company will ensure that notice is given in advance by posting notice of admission fees for support persons where the Company fees are posted.

E. Notice of Disruptions in Service

Service disruptions may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of the Company. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services that are relied upon by customers with disabilities, the Company will provide advance notice of the disruption, where possible. In some circumstances, such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruptions, advance notice may not be possible.

Notification Information:

In the event of a disruption, notification of the disruption will include the following information:

- goods or services that are disrupted or unavailable
- reason for the disruption
- anticipated duration
- a description of alternative services or options

Notifications Options:

When disruptions occur, the Company will provide notice by:

- posting notices in conspicuous places including at the point of disruption, at the main entrance and the nearest accessible entrance to the service disruption and/or on the Company website;
- contacting customers with appointments scheduled during the disruption;
- verbally notifying customers when they are making a reservation or appointment; or
- any other methods that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

F. Training

Training will be provided to:

- a) all employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractors who deal with the public or other third parties and act on behalf of the Company including but not limited to salespersons, drivers, vendors, event operators, call centers and third party marketing agents; and,
- b) individuals involved in the development and approval of customer service policies, practices and procedures.

Training Provisions:

As reflected in *Regulation 429/07*, training will cover the following:

- the purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.
- the requirements of *Regulation 429/07*.
- Instructions on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of both visible and non-visible disabilities.
- Instructions on how to interact with people with disabilities who:
 - use assistive devices;
 - require the assistance of a guide dog, service dog or other service animal; or
 - require the use of a support person (including the handling of admission fees)

- Instructions on how to use equipment or devices that are available on the Company premises or that the Company provides to assist people with disabilities.
- Instructions on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing the Company goods or services.
- The Company's policies, procedures and practices pertaining to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities.

Training Schedule:

The Company will provide training to employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractors as soon as practicable. Training will be provided to new employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractors who deal with the public on the Company's behalf during the orientation process. Ongoing training will be provided in the event of changes to legislation and changes in the Company's policies, practices and/or procedures.

Record of Training:

The Company will keep a record of training that includes the dates training was provided and the number of employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractors who attended the training.

G. Feedback Process

The Company shall provide customers with the opportunity to provide feedback on the goods and service provided to customers with disabilities. Information about the feedback process will be readily available to all customers and notice of the process will be made available upon request by contacting the Accessibility Officer. Feedback forms along with alternate methods of providing feedback will also be available upon request.

Submitting Feedback:

Feedback about the manner in which the Company provides goods and services to persons with disabilities may be submitted to the following contact person:

Accessibility Officer

1500 Don Mills Road, 3rd Floor
Toronto Ontario
M3B 3L7
Telephone: (416) 445-9800
Email: accessibilityofficer@numeris.ca
Website: www.numeris.ca

Individuals who provide the Company with feedback will receive acknowledgement of their feedback and the individual will be notified of any actions that results from the feedback, if any.

H. Notice of Availability and Format of Documents

Documents related to *Regulation 429/07* are available upon request and can be provided in a format that takes into account individual disabilities. Notification of the availability of these documents will be posted in a conspicuous place on the Company premises, on the Company website and/or in any other reasonable method.

I. Workplace Emergency Response Information

In addition to providing customers with disabilities with full accessibility to goods and services at all times in a way that respects their dignity and independence, the Company is committed to providing employees with disabilities with the same opportunities as other employees. With this in mind, the Company will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to all employees with a visible or non-visible disability, if the individual so requires and as soon as practicable. Upon employee consent, this information can also be provided to the employee who is designated to assist the employee with disabilities.

Administration

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy or its related procedures please contact:

Accessibility Officer

1500 Don Mills Road, 3rd Floor
Toronto Ontario
M3B 3L7
Telephone: (416) 445-9800
Email: accessibilityofficer@numeris.ca
Website: www.numeris.ca

This policy and its related procedures will be reviewed as required in the event of legislative changes.

Note: Company "Goods" such as diaries, panel materials and publications are not required under the Customer Service Standard to be transferred into accessible format.