

Policy: Accessible Customer Service	Policy #: CS-294
Department: Corporate Services	Effective Date: December 15, 2009
	Revision Date:

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1** The Town of Lakeshore is committed to being responsive to the needs of all its residents and visitors. To do this, we must recognize the diverse needs of all of our residents and visitors by striving to provide services that are accessible to all. As a public service provider, the Town of Lakeshore is committed to ensuring its goods and services are provided in an accessible manner.
- 1.2** The Town of Lakeshore will promote accessibility through the development of policies, procedures and practices and by ensuring they consider people with disabilities. To do this we will make reasonable efforts to ensure the policies, procedures and practices address integration, independence, dignity and equal opportunity.
- 1.3** The Town of Lakeshore will ensure that goods and services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- 1.4** The Town of Lakeshore will ensure that the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities will be integrated whether temporarily or permanently, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use, or benefit from the goods and services.
- 1.5** The Town of Lakeshore will ensure that persons with disabilities will be given an equal opportunity to obtain, use and benefit from the goods and services.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1** This policy shall apply to all departments, divisions and sections within the Town of Lakeshore.
- 2.2** This policy shall also apply to all employees.
- 2.3** This policy shall also apply to every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Town of Lakeshore, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise.
- 2.4** This policy applies to all Committees of Council.

- 2.5 This policy shall not apply during any period where the Town of Lakeshore has declared a “State of Emergency” as defined under the Emergency Management Act.

3.0 Policy

3.1 Definitions:

- 3.1.1 Person with disabilities is defined according to the “Accessibility for Ontarian with Disabilities Act, 2005” as 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, brain injury, paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness, muteness hearing impediment or speech impediment, physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device.
- 3.1.2 Persons with a condition of mental impairment or developmental disability.
- 3.1.3 Persons with a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language.
- 3.1.4 Persons with 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.
- 3.1.5 Service Animal - is defined as either a “guide dog” as defined in Section 1 of the Blind Persons Rights’ Act or a “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. If it is not readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for the reasons relating to his/her disability, the person can be asked to provide a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.
- 3.1.6 Support Person – for the purpose of this policy, a support person is defined as another person who accompanies a

person with a disability in order to help him/her with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

- 3.2** Procedures and Practices: Departmental procedures and practices will strive to reflect or achieve the following:
- 3.2.1** Communications will be considered in a manner that takes into consideration a person's disability.
 - 3.2.2** Staff and volunteers who interact with the public or who are involved in the development of policies, practices and procedures regarding the provision of goods or services for the Town of Lakeshore will receive appropriate training.
 - 3.2.3** Persons with disabilities accompanied by a guide dog or service animal will be permitted in those areas of the premises owned or operated by the Town of Lakeshore that are typically open to the public unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law.
 - 3.2.4** Where an animal is excluded by law from the premises, the reason why the animal is excluded shall be explained to the person with the disability and other reasonable arrangements to provide goods and services shall be explored with the assistance of the person with the disability.
 - 3.2.5** Where a service animal is unruly or disruptive (jumping on people, biting, or other harmful behaviour) an employee may ask the person with the disability to remove the animal from the area or refuse access to goods or services. In this event, other reasonable arrangements to provide goods or services shall be explored with the assistance of the person with the disability.
 - 3.2.6** Owners of service animals may receive information from staff as to the location of fresh water for the service animal and where service animals may be walked to relieve themselves.
 - 3.2.7** Persons with disabilities accompanied by a Support Person will be permitted to be accompanied by that Support Person in premises owned and operated by the Town of Lakeshore.

- 3.2.8** If admission to an event is permitted and fees are payable to the Town of Lakeshore, the Support Person is permitted to attend at no cost.
- 3.2.9** If admission to an event is permitted and fees are payable to a third party, the Support Person is permitted to attend the event at their own cost.
- 3.2.10** Where admission fees are charged, notice will be provided ahead of time on what admission, if any, would be charged for a support worker of a person with a disability.
- 3.2.11** The customer shall determine whether a Support Person is necessary, however where an employee believes that a Support Person should be in attendance to protect the health and safety of the customer or others, the following criteria shall be used in consulting with the customer:
- 3.2.11.1** When there is a significant risk to the health and safety of the person with a disability or others (the mere possibility of risk is insufficient);
 - 3.2.11.2** When the risk is greater than the risk associated with the customers;
 - 3.2.11.3** When the risk cannot be eliminated or reduced by other means;
 - 3.2.11.4** When the assessment of the risk is based on consideration of the duration of the risk, the nature and severity of the potential harm, the likelihood that the potential harm will occur, and the imminence of the potential harm; and
 - 3.2.11.5** When the assessment of the risk is based on the individual's actual characteristics, not merely on generalizations, misperceptions, ignorance or fears about a disability.
- 3.2.12** Public notice will be provided as to what facilities or services are available to people with disabilities within the Town of Lakeshore.
- 3.2.13** In the event of an emergency, staff members shall assist individuals with accessibility needs to exit the building. In

the case where a person with accessibility needs is unable to exit the building (i.e. wheelchair), staff, in accordance with the fire plan, will assist them until emergency services personnel arrive. Once emergency services personnel arrive at the scene, the staff member will inform them of the need for assistance for the person with accessibility needs.

3.3 Service Disruption:

- 3.3.1** If, in order to obtain, use or benefit from the Town of Lakeshore's goods or services, persons with disabilities usually use particular facilities or services (for example, elevators) and if there is a planned temporary disruption in those services in whole or in part, the Town of Lakeshore shall give notice of the disruption to the public.
- 3.3.2** Notice of the disruption must include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, contact information and a description of alternative facilities or service, if any, that are available.
- 3.3.3** Notice will be given by posting the information about the service disruption at a conspicuous place on the premises owned by the Town of Lakeshore, as well as by posting the information on the Town of Lakeshore's website (www.lakeshore.ca) and via the telephone. If deemed appropriate and time permits, planned disruptions of services may also be published in local newspapers and broadcast on local radio stations.
- 3.3.4** If a temporary service disruption of the website is planned, advance notice to the extent possible, keeping with the conditions of the service disruption section of this policy, shall be provided.
- 3.3.5** In the event of an unplanned service disruption, notice will be given as soon as feasibly possible in the manner described in Section 3.3.3.
- 3.3.6** In the event of a service disruption, alternative methods of service may be considered and those impacted by service interruption shall be informed of any alternative methods.

3.4 Format of Documents:

- 3.4.1** The Town of Lakeshore will ensure there is public notice that documents required under the Customer Service legislation are available upon request.
- 3.4.2** If the Town of Lakeshore is requested to provide a copy of a document to a person with a disability, the Town of Lakeshore shall give the person the document or the information in the document, in a format that takes into account the person's disability.
- 3.4.3** The Town and the person with a disability may agree upon the format to be used for the document or information.
- 3.4.4** Material printed in-house and publications produced on behalf of the Town of Lakeshore should contain a note indicating "alternate" formats are available and include relevant contact information.
- 3.4.5** The time frame attached to the conversion process varies depending on the media chosen, the size, complexity, quality of source documents and number of documents to be converted. Documents shall be returned in a timely manner depending on the factors previously noted.
- 3.4.6** Conversion shall be processed in-house whenever possible. When a member of the public requests a Town of Lakeshore document, or portion thereof, in an alternate format, the department of origin shall be responsible for the cost of the conversion, materials and distribution, not the public requestor.
- 3.4.7** In-house printing, where possible, should adhere to the Canadian National Institute (CNIB) for the Blind's Clear Print Standards or any subsequent accessible information and communication policies.

3.5 Training:

- 3.5.1** The Town of Lakeshore shall ensure that all staff are trained on policies, practices and procedures establishing the accessible provision of its good and services to persons with disabilities.
- 3.5.2** Every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Town of Lakeshore, whether the

person does so as an employee, volunteer, committee member or otherwise shall be trained.

3.5.3 Every person who participates in developing the Town of Lakeshore's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to members of the public or other third parties shall be included in the training.

3.5.4 Training shall be mandatory for all new employees upon their initial orientation. In addition, all employees should receive refresher training every five years thereafter, as required or as necessary.

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

3.5.5.1 How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities, as outlined in this policy and associated practices and procedures.

3.5.5.2 How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person, as outlined in this policy and associated practices and procedures.

3.5.5.3 How to use equipment or devices available on premises owned or leased by the Town of Lakeshore, or otherwise provided by the Town of Lakeshore that may help with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability.

3.5.5.4 What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing goods or services provided by the Town of Lakeshore.

3.6 Assistive Devices:

3.6.1 The Town of Lakeshore acknowledges that persons with disabilities may elect to use their own personal assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services offered by the Town of Lakeshore.

3.6.2 Should a person with a disability be unable to access the Town of Lakeshore's goods and services through the use of their own personal assistive device, the Town of Lakeshore will:

3.6.2.1 Determine if the provision of the good or service is inaccessible, based upon the individual's requirements.

3.6.2.2 Assess potential accessible service delivery options to meet the needs of the individual.

3.6.2.3 Notify the person with a disability of an alternative method of providing the goods or service and how they can access the service temporarily or on a permanent basis.

3.7 Feedback Process:

3.7.1 Should a member of the public wish to make a complaint regarding the accessible provision of goods or services they have received :

3.7.1.1 The member of the public can advise the Town of Lakeshore of their complaint or concern by sending an email outlining the nature of the complaint or concern to the Special Projects Officer arsenault@lakeshore.ca.

3.7.1.2 Contact by telephone the Town of Lakeshore to speak to the person responsible for delivering the goods and services for which there is a complaint.

3.7.1.3 Attend the office of the Town of Lakeshore and meet with the person responsible for delivering the goods or services for which there is a complaint.

3.7.2 A response will be provided to anyone providing feedback or comment regarding the provision of accessible goods and services, in the same manner as the complaint or comment was received, within 30 days.

3.7.3 A staff member will assist the member of public in completing the Feedback Form. If a resident calls or emails a complaint, the staff member receiving the information shall complete the Feedback Form.

- 3.7.4 If deemed appropriate, feedback regarding the provision of accessible goods and services may be directed to the Town of Lakeshore Accessibility Advisory Committee for recommendations on how to address the complaint or comment.
- 3.7.5 If agreement on the resolution of a complaint cannot be reached between the appropriate persons at the Town of Lakeshore and the complainant, the matter will be directed to the Chief Administrative Officer for disposition.
- 3.7.6 If the Chief Administrative Officer is unable to provide a satisfactory resolution to the complaint, the complainant has the option of presenting the complaint to Town Council for final disposition.
- 3.7.7 All feedback will be kept in strict confidence and used to improve customer service.

4.0 Responsibility

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of the Director of Corporate Services to ensure staff are aware of and follows this policy.
- 4.2 It is the responsibility of the Special Projects Officer to ensure this policy is communicated to the public and to the employees of the Town of Lakeshore.
- 4.3 It is the responsibility of the Municipal Clerk to perform the liaison with the Lakeshore Accessibility Advisory Committee.
- 4.4 It is the responsibility of staff to follow this policy.
- 4.5 It is the responsibility of the Town of Lakeshore to make sure all information is accessible to all parties involved.

5.0 Consequences

- 5.1 Failure to follow this policy may result in violations in legislation.
- 5.2 Failure to follow this policy may result in discipline.

6.0 References

- 6.1** Accessibility for Ontarian with Disabilities Act
- 6.2** Canadian National Institute for the Blind' s Clear print Standards
- 6.3** Accessible Customer Service Best Practices and Procedures
- 6.4** Feedback Form
- 6.5** Addressing Customer Feedback Form
- 6.6** Service Disruption Notice



TOWN OF LAKESHORE

ADDRESSING CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

Date feedback received: _____

Name of Customer (optional): _____

Contact Information (if appropriate): _____

Details: _____

Follow-up: _____

Response / Action to be taken: _____

Staff member: _____

Date: _____



FEEDBACK FORM

Thank you for visiting the Town of Lakeshore. We value all of our customers and strive to meet everyone's needs. Please tell us the date and time of your visit.

You visited one of our facilities on _____ at _____.

Did we respond to your customer service needs? Yes or No

If no – what could we have done to improve on for your next visit?

Was our customer service provided to you in an accessible manner? Yes or No

If no - please explain _____

Did you have any problems accessing our goods and services? Yes or No

If yes – please explain _____

Please add any other comments you may have: _____

Contact Information: (optional)

If contact information is provided, we will provide a response.

Thank you for your cooperation

Town of Lakeshore



TOWN OF LAKESHORE

NOTICE OF PLANNED SERVICE DISRUPTION

There will be a scheduled service disruption at:

_____ impacting
(Location)

The delivery of goods and services for customers from

_____ to _____.
(Time) (Time)

The goods and service unavailable during this service interruption are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

The services listed above can be accessed at the following time, date, location or method:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

We apologize for any inconvenience this disruption has caused. Should you require additional information on the delivery of this service please contact the Town of Lakeshore at 519-728-2700 and ask to speak with the Special Projects Officer.



TOWN OF LAKESHORE

NOTICE OF UNPLANNED SERVICE DISRUPTION

Due to unforeseen circumstances, there is a service disruption at:

_____ impacting
(Facility)

The delivery of goods and services for customers from:

_____ to _____.
(Time) (Time)

The goods and service unavailable during this service interruption are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

The services listed above can be accessed at the following time, date, location or method:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

We apologize for any inconvenience this disruption has caused. Should you require additional information on the delivery of this service please contact the Town of Lakeshore at 519-728-2700 and ask to speak with the Special Projects Officer.