

The Corporation of the Town of Deep River

STATEMENT OF POLICY

(Schedule 'A' to By-law No. 6-88)

Title: Accessible Customer Service Policy

Page 1 of 5

Number: A00-1

Effective: June 10, 2009

By-Law No. 41-2009

Reviewed: June 10, 2009

Application: This policy applies to all operations of the Town of Deep River including the provision of goods and services to people with disabilities.

1. PURPOSE AND APPLICATION

- 1.1. Under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, all municipalities must meet the requirements of accessibility standards established by regulation. This policy establishes the accessibility standards for customer service for the Town of Deep River, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 429/07. This policy applies to all employees of the Town of Deep River, agents, volunteers and contracted service staff.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1. The Town of Deep River is committed to providing exceptional and accessible service for its customers. Goods and services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of all customers. The provision of services to persons with disabilities will be integrated wherever possible. Persons with disabilities will be given an opportunity equal to that given to others, to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services provided by and on behalf of the Town of Deep River.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1. **Assistive Devices:** A device used to assist persons with disabilities in carrying out activities or in accessing the services of persons or organizations.
- 3.2. **Disability:** (a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or

physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device, (b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability, (c) a learning disability or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language, (d) 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.

3.3. Guide Dog: A guide dog as defined in Section 1 of the Blind Persons' Rights Act is a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having qualifications prescribed by the regulations under the Blind Persons' Rights Act.

3.4. Support Animals: Any animal used by a person with a disability for reasons relating to the disability where it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or where the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that he or she requires the animal for reasons relating to his or her disability; or 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.

3.5. Support Persons: A support person is a person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with the communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1. Use of Service Animals

4.1.1. If a person with a disability is accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal, the Town shall ensure that the person is permitted to enter the premises with the animal and to keep the animal with him or her unless excluded by law from the premises. If law excludes the service animal, the Town shall use other measures to provide service.

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

4.1.3. It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that his or her service animal is kept in control at all times.

4.2. Use of Support Persons

- 4.2.1.** If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, the Town shall ensure that both persons are permitted to enter the premises together and that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the support person while on the premises.
- 4.2.2.** The Town may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on Town premises in situations where it is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises.
- 4.2.3.** A support person, when assisting a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Town's goods and services, will be permitted to attend at no charge where an admission fee is applicable.

4.2 Assistive Devices

- 4.2.1** A person with a disability shall be able to use their assistive devices to access goods or services. A person with a disability may provide their own assistive device for the purpose of obtaining, using and benefiting from the Town's goods and services. Exceptions may occur in situations where the Town has determined that the assistive device may pose a risk to the health and safety of a person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises. In these situations and others, the Town may offer a person with a disability other reasonable measures to assist him or her in obtaining, using and benefiting from the Town's goods and services, where the Town has such other measures available.
- 4.2.2** It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that his or her assistive device is operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

4.3 Notice of Temporary Disruptions

- 4.3.1** The Town will make reasonable effort to provide notice of temporary disruptions. Notices must include the following: reasons for disruption, anticipated duration, and description of alternative facilities or services available.
- 4.3.2** The Town will make reasonable effort to provide prior notice of planned disruption if possible, recognizing that in some circumstances such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruption, advance notice will not be possible. In such cases, the Town will provide notice as soon as possible.
- 4.3.3** The Town will provide notice of any temporary disruptions using some or all of the following: by posting the information on the Town website

(www.deepriver.ca), on the Town Hall entrance doors, or by any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances as soon as reasonably possible.

4.4 Accessibility Training

- 4.4.1** The Town will ensure that all persons to whom this policy applies receive training as required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service as soon as practicable.
- 4.4.2** The contents of the training will include the purpose of the Act, how to interact with people with various disabilities, how to interact with people who use assistance of a service animal or support person, how to use assistive devices available on the premises, and what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing service.
- 4.4.3** The Town will keep records of the training including the date on which training was provided and the names of individuals to whom it is provided. The names of individuals trained will be recorded for training administration purposes, subject to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA).

4.5 Feedback Process

- 4.5.1** Feedback from the public is welcomed as it may identify areas that require change and encourage continuous service improvements. The Town will establish a process to receive and respond to feedback.
- 4.5.2** The Town shall receive feedback in any form, including email, telephone, regular mail and in person. All questions and comments shall be acknowledged within 5 business days from the date of receipt. Response time to the feedback will depend on the issue, but will not exceed 15 days unless there are extenuating circumstances involved. Acknowledgement and response will be the responsibility of the CAO/Clerk.
- 4.5.3** The Town will also establish a comment system, whereby comment boxes will be located at the Town Hall, Community Pool, and Arena. Comments on the delivery of goods and services to persons with disabilities will be collected.
- 4.5.4** Comments will be collected once per quarter from each facility. The findings will be posted on the Town website or by any other appropriate method in December of each year. Collecting feedback data and summarizing the findings will be the responsibility of the CAO/Clerk.

4.6 Notice of Availability

- 4.6.1** Notice of availability of documents required under this regulation will be available upon request and made available through the CAO/Clerk's Office. This notice may be given by posting the information at a conspicuous place owned and operated by the Town, the Town website, and/or any other reasonable method.

4.7 Format of Documents

- 4.7.1** When the Town is required to give a copy of a document to a person with a disability, the Town shall provide the document or information contained in the document in a format that takes into account the person's disability. The Town and the person with a disability will agree on what format will be used.