

Policy Approval	
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All staff, Board, Poster Developed for Public	
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TITLE: ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) was passed by the Ontario legislature with the goal of creating standards to improve accessibility across the province.
- 1.2 The AODA allows the government to develop specific standards of accessibility that are designed to help make Ontario more accessible.
- 1.3 One of the specific standards that has been developed, and made law, is the Accessible Customer Service Standard. This standard details specific requirements for all service providers.
- 1.4 In general, providers must deliver service in a way that preserves the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Providers must also integrate services and equal opportunity.
- 1.5 The accessibility standards for customer service applied on and after January 1, 2010 and to other providers of goods or services on and after January 1, 2012.

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1 The purpose of this Customer Service Standards Policy is to fulfill the requirements set out in regulation 429/07 to establish a policy for the MBCHC for governing the provisions of its services to persons with disabilities.
- 2.2 The MBCHC shall use reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles 2.3 to 2.7.
- 2.3 Goods or services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- 2.4 The provision of goods or services will be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services.
- 2.5 Persons with disabilities will be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods or services.
- 2.6 Persons with disabilities may use assistive devices and/or support persons in the access of goods and services.
- 2.7 Employees, when communicating with a person with a disability shall do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

3.0 APPLICATION

- 3.1 This policy shall apply to every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the MBCHC Hub whether the person does so as an employee, members of council, board members, agents, contractors and volunteers.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

4.1 Accessibility Management Team:

The persons designated by the MBCHC Hub to deal with accessibility issues and concerns.

4.2 **Assistive Devices:**

Any auxiliary aid such as communication aid, cognition aids, personal mobility and medical aids (ie.canes, crutches, wheelchairs or hearing aids, service animals etc).

4.3 **Disability:**

DISABILITY	EXAMPLE OF DISABILITY
Physical	Include a range of functional limitation from minor difficulties in moving or coordinating one body part or through muscle weakness. This disability can be congenital or acquired. A physical disability may affect an individual’s ability to perform manual tasks, move independently, control movements, reach, pull/push and/or have strength or endurance.
Hearing	Includes difficulties distinguishing certain frequencies, sounds or words; this may be a person that is deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.
Deaf - Blind	Is a combination of hearing and vision loss. This disability interferes with communication, learning, orientation and mobility; assistance through Braille, telephone devices, communication boards, etc.
Vision	In some cases it may be difficult to tell if the person has a vision disability – some are more notable i.e. guide dog and/or white cane.
Intellectual	This disability affects a person’s ability to think and reason. May be caused by genetic factors, exposure to environmental toxins, and/or psychiatric disorders.
Speech	Disabilities may involve the partial or total loss of the ability to speak.
Learning	This includes a range of disorders that affect verbal and non-verbal information acquisition, retention, understanding and processing.
Mental Health	These disabilities include a range of disorders and are broken down into three types: anxiety, mood and behavioural. Some people may act edgy or irritated, act aggressively and be seen as pushy or abrupt.

Disabilities are not always visible or easy to distinguish.

4.4 Employees:

Any person(s) who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the MBCHC Hub, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, contractor, volunteer, board, or otherwise.

4.5 Persons With Disabilities:

Individuals that are afflicted with a disability as defined under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

4.6 Service Animals:

4.6.1 The MBCHC Hub is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal, in the areas of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties. All staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public will be properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

4.6.2 An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability:

- (a) If it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or,
- (b) If the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse practitioner confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.
- (c) If a service animal is excluded by law, the MBCHC Hub will ensure that alternate means are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the MBCHC Hub's services.
- (d) If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, the MBCHC Hub 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.
- (e) The MBCHC Hub may also, or instead, 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.

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- (f) It should be noted that it is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that his or her service animal is kept under control at all times.

4.7 **Support Persons:**

- 4.7.1 A "support person" means in relation to a person with a disability, another person who whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member or friend that accompanies a person with a disability in order to help/assist with communications, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods and services.

5.0 EXCLUSIONS

This policy shall not apply during any period where the MBCHC Hub has declared a "State of Emergency" as defined under the Emergency Management Act.

6.0 DOCUMENTATION

The MBCHC Hub, shall upon request, supply a copy of the policy, practices and procedures required under the Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service to any person(s).

7.0 REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

The Accessibility Management Team shall be responsible for the review process and any subsequent amendments to this policy document. Review and amendments shall take place on an ongoing basis, and at a maximum interval of every two (2) years.

8.0 CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

- 8.1 The ultimate goal of the MBCHC Hub is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving all people, including those with disabilities. Comments regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

8.0 CUSTOMER FEEDBACK (Cont'd)

- 8.2 Feedback regarding the way the MBCHC Hub provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made by using a feedback form, by mail, e-mail, or verbally.
- 8.3 All feedback should be directed to the Accessibility Management Team. Customers can expect a response within thirty (30) days and will set out action (if required) to be taken in response to complaints or concerns.
- 8.4 The Accessibility Management Team shall consist of the Chief Building Official, Human Resources Advisor, Planning Administrator and the Administrative Executive Assistant (Human Resources/Community Services, Building and Planning Departments).

9.0 SERVICE DISRUPTION NOTICE

- 9.1 The MBCHC Hub is aware that the operation of its services and facilities is important to the public. However, temporary disruptions in the MBCHC Hub services and facilities may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the MBCHC Hub's control or knowledge.
- 9.2 The MBCHC Hub will make reasonable effort to provide notice of the disruption to the public, including information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that may be available.
- 9.3 The MBCHC Hub 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.
- 9.4 In such cases, the MBCHC Hub will provide notice as soon as possible. When temporary disruptions occur to the MBCHC Hub services or facilities, the MBCHC Hub will provide notice by posting the information in visible places.

10.0 TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- 10.1 The MBCHC Hub will ensure that all persons to whom this policy applies receive training as required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.
- 10.2 The amount and format of training given will be tailored to suit each person's interactions with the public and his or her involvement in the development of policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of services.
- 10.3 The content of the training will include:
- (a) A review of the purposes of the AODA;
 - (b) The requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429 / 07);
 - (c) Instruction on the MBCHC policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of services to persons with disabilities;
 - (d) How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;
 - (e) What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the MBCHC Hub services;
 - (f) How to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or who require the assistance of a support person or service animal; and,
 - (g) Information about the equipment or devices available at the MBCHC premises that may help with the provision of services to persons with disabilities.

10.4 **Timeline for Training:**

Training will be provided as soon as practicable upon an individual being assigned the applicable duties as well as on an ongoing basis as changes occur to the policies, procedures and practices governing the provision of services to persons with disabilities.

10.5 **Records of Training:**

The MBCHC Hub will keep records of the training, including the date on which training is provided and the number 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").

11.0 AVAILABILITY AND FORMAT OF DOCUMENTS REQUIRED BY THE ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE (ONTARIO REGULATION 429/07)

- 11.1 All documents required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, including the MBCHC Hub Accessible Customer Service policies, procedures and practices, notices of temporary disruptions, training records, and written feedback process are available upon request, subject to MFIPPA.
- 11.2 When providing a document to a person with a disability, the MBCHC Hub will provide the document, or the information contained in the document, in a format that takes the person's disability into account.

12.0 NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS

- 12.1 Notice of availability of all documents required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service will be posted at the MBCHC Hub.