

POLICIES, PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES
UNDER
ONTARIO REGULATION 429/07
ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

THE
CORPORATION
OF THE
CITY OF BELLEVILLE



Approved by Belleville City Council
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PART A - Accessibility Policy under O. Reg. 429/07

1. Purpose and Application:

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 City, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 429/07. This policy applies to all employees of the City, agents, volunteers and contracted service staff.

2. Definitions:

Accessible means customer service is provided in a manner that is capable of being easily understood or appreciated; easy to get at; capable of being reached, or entered; obtainable.

Disability means:

- a) Any degree of physical 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 impairment, 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; and/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. Policy Statement:

The City of Belleville is committed to providing outstanding 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 opportunities equal to those given to others, to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services provided by and on behalf of the City.

4. Policy Requirements:

a) Use of Service Animals and Support Persons

- i) If a person with a disability is accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal, the City will ensure that the person is permitted to enter any facility with the animal and to keep the animal with him or her unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law. Where a service animal is excluded by law, the City will ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use and benefit from the City's goods and services.

The animal will need to be under the control of the owner at all times. To ensure service animals may be appropriately accommodated, people will be encouraged to advise the City ahead of time when they will be accompanied by a service animal, and of any special accommodations that will be needed.

If a service animal is not immediately recognizable as such, a letter certifying that it is a service animal signed by a physician or nurse may be requested before allowing entry.

- ii) If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, the City will ensure that the support person is allowed entry, and that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the support person. The City may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others.

A support person may accompany participants who use the facilities or programs free of charge where they are assisting the person with a disability, and not participating directly in the activity or program. Where a support person also chooses to participate in the activity or program, or where their participation is unavoidable, for example when traveling on public transit, the regular fee or fare will apply to the support person as well. Notice of the fee or fare for a Support Person will be provided in the same location as other fees or fares are advertised, wherever such a fee or fare is required.

b) Notice of Temporary Disruptions

- i) The City will provide notice of temporary disruptions as soon as it is reasonably possible to do so. The notice will include a description of the service that is unavailable, the reason for the disruption, its anticipated

duration, and a description of any available alternative services along with information on how to access these.

Notice of the disruption will be conspicuous, and will be provided as follows:

- written posted signage at the location of the disruption, and at the entrance door to the facility in question;
- posting on the City's accessible website; and
- verbal communication when possible.

c) Accessibility Training Policy

i) Every person who deals with members of the public or who participates in developing the City's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to the public; including City staff, volunteers, agents, contractors and others who provide service on behalf of the City will receive training regarding the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities.

ii) The training will include these policies, practices and procedures and will cover the following information:

1. the purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act;
2. how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;
3. how to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device, or require the assistance of a service animal or support person;
4. how to use equipment made available by the City to help people with disabilities to access goods and services; and
5. what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing the City's goods and services.

iii) Training will be provided to each person according to his or her needs and duties and as soon as is practicable after he or she is assigned the applicable duties. Training will be provided on an ongoing basis in connection with changes to policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities. A record of the dates on which training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it is provided will be kept.

d) Feedback Process

i) The City has a feedback process through which people with disabilities are encouraged to provide information and feedback about the goods and services they receive. Feedback can be received in a variety of ways, in person, by mail or email, by telephone, fax, or otherwise.

- ii) The feedback process is promoted on the City's accessible website. A copy of the feedback process and feedback form is available upon request.
- e) Notice of Availability of Documents**
- i) The City will provide the public with notice of the availability of the documents required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O. Reg. 429/07 ("required documents"). Notice of availability will be provided on the City's accessible website.
 - ii) Due to the need to provide current information, and the likelihood of amendments to the documentation over time, the required documents will be available at only a limited number of service counters. The notice of availability will explain how to obtain a copy of these documents.
- f) Format of Documents**
- i) If the City is required, by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, to give a copy of a document to a person with a disability, the City will take into account the person's ability to access the information and will provide the document or information contained in the document in a format that meets those needs as agreed upon with the person.
- g) Related and Supporting Documentation**
- i) Practices and procedures
 - ii) Training contents and summary
 - iii) Feedback form and tracking sheet for receiving, circulating, tracking and responding to feedback about services for people with disabilities
 - iv) Template to provide notice of a planned service disruption
 - v) Template to provide notice of an unexpected service disruption
 - vi) Listing of assistive devices provided by the City, and instructions for their use.

PART B - Accessibility Practices and Procedures under O. Reg. 429/07

When serving a customer with a disability, remember that they are entitled to identical or equivalent service to someone without a disability. Try to make sure that assistance you offer them promotes dignity and independence. Do not provide assistance without permission unless there is an emergency and they are in immediate danger.

1. General Practices for Delivering Customer Service to People with Disabilities

a) Delivering counter service to people with disabilities:

When approaching someone at the counter, you may not know if they have a disability. Approach everyone with the same degree of courtesy and professionalism. If someone identifies that they have a disability, or requests assistance, do your best to accommodate while providing them with the highest degree of dignity and independence.

If someone is having difficulty communicating with you, ask them what you can do to improve the situation. For example, someone who is hard of hearing might need to move to a quieter area, or someone with low vision might have trouble seeing due to glare from a window or skylight. Review and become comfortable with practices related to specific disabilities in Section 2.

b) Delivering service to people with disabilities in your private office:

When meeting with someone in your office, you may not be aware that they have a disability. Treat everyone with courtesy and professionalism. If someone identifies that they have a disability, or requests assistance, do your best to accommodate while providing them with the highest degree of dignity and independence.

If someone has a visible disability that is likely to prevent them from either accessing your office, or meeting comfortably there, ask them if the barriers you suspect will be a problem. If the person is unable to gain access to your office, make every effort to meet in an alternate accessible location, considering their particular needs. Do not make assumptions about someone's particular needs, ask them.

Also keep invisible disabilities in mind, for example some people may have environmental sensitivities to dust or perfume that could become a concern. Some people may also have mental health issues that could limit their ability to meet in a smaller space. Others may have physical disabilities that could prevent them from sitting in a particular type of chair,

or walking up stairs. Review and become comfortable with practices related to specific disabilities in Section 2.

c) Delivering service to people with disabilities on-site:

When interacting with the public, you may or may not be aware that someone has a disability. Treat everyone with respect, courtesy and professionalism. If someone identifies that they have a disability, or requests assistance, do your best to accommodate while providing them with the highest degree of dignity and independence.

The practices contemplate two different scenarios:

- i) If your duties involve interacting with someone who has a disability, for example while carrying out an inspection at their residence.

Be aware that people with disabilities may take extra time to answer the door. If someone is deaf or hard of hearing, they may not hear a knock at the door. Others may have assistive devices to detect door knocks, or doorbells that provide visual cues. Check for any posted signs that might explain how to signal your presence, or if a different door should be used.

- ii) If someone with a disability approaches you for information or assistance while you are working.

If a sidewalk or other path of travel is obstructed by your work, always ensure that the procedure for notice of temporary disruption in Section 3 is followed.

Treat everyone with courtesy and professionalism. If someone requests assistance, do your best to accommodate while providing them with the highest degree of dignity and independence.

Review and become comfortable with practices related to specific disabilities in Section 2.

d) Delivering service to people with disabilities by telephone:

When speaking with the public over the telephone, you may not be aware that a client has a disability. Treat everyone with respect, courtesy and professionalism. If someone identifies that they have a disability and requests special accommodation, do your best to comply while providing them with the highest degree of dignity and independence.

If documents are to be provided following a telephone conversation, review the following section as well.

e) Delivering service to people with disabilities with written or printed documents, e-mail, or fax:

Ensure that the format of documents will be useable by the client. They may require a plain-language explanation to accompany the material, or an electronic format that could be read by their computer. Try to balance efficient use of City resources with providing documents in a format that will be useful and convenient for each client. If the client proposes a format that would be costly, time consuming or difficult for the City to produce, explore other options with them as well.

Review and become comfortable with Subsection 3. f) of this Part B relating to format of documents.

f) Delivering service to people with disabilities using TTY:

The TTY machine allows you to type back and forth with someone who is unable to use a regular telephone. Modern TTYs provide a printed record of the conversation at each end. When using TTY, remember to keep sentences short and direct.

Supplementary practices specific to using TTY are included in this documentation package. Please review and understand these supplementary practices before using TTY.

g) Delivering service to people with disabilities using Bell Relay Service:

Bell Relay Service allows people who use TTY to communicate with other persons by phone. A call is placed via the TTY operator, who then relays the information by calling and repeating it to a hearing customer. Relay operators are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The service is easy to use and is available almost anywhere in the world. There are no extra charges to use the service; Bell Relay calls are billed as regular calls.

Review Subsection 3. g) for the procedure to place a call to someone using Bell Relay Service.

h) Delivering service to people with disabilities at public meetings:

Public meetings present different challenges in delivering service to people with disabilities. It is important to ensure that people are able to

access information being provided at meetings, and provide input where appropriate. Much of this needs to be addressed at the planning-stage.

Supplementary practices specific to organizing accessible meetings are included in this documentation package. Please review and understand these supplementary practices in order to organize accessible public meetings. Please also review Subsection 3. a) procedures for accommodating service animals.

2. Specific Practices for Serving Anyone with Special Needs

Adapted from Accessibility Ontario Web site, Ministry of Citizenship, Copyright Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2002.

- Offer your help, but don't insist.
- Ask how to help, and what to do.
- Respect the person's determination of his/her own needs and level of autonomy.
- Try to convey the message that you are comfortable and not anxious when helping.
- Relax and Smile!
- Avoid making assumptions - Ask!
- Treat a disabled person the same as a non-disabled person, as much as possible.
- Don't be afraid to ask someone to repeat something you didn't understand.
- Ask questions about the disability only if you really need to know.
- Address everyone directly - not the interpreter, attendant, or companion.
- Don't touch anything - equipment, dogs, wheelchairs, etc., without asking first.

REMEMBER: People with disabilities are individuals who come with the same variety of attitudes, interests and personalities as the general population. Don't embarrass anyone by making assumptions. If you don't know what to do in any situation, ask! The person who lives with the disability is the best resource for information on how to help.

a) What you need to know about People with Visual Impairments

About the disability...

In order to be considered blind under Canadian Law, someone must have 10% or less of normal vision in the better eye, after putting on glasses or contact lenses. That means that this person must stand 20 feet away or less, to see something that a person with 20/20 vision can see from 200 feet away.

Only 10% of people who are legally blind see absolutely nothing. The majority have some vision. How much they see, and how functional it is varies greatly from person to person. Some have tunnel vision, and can only see straight ahead. Others have no central vision, but can see around

the edges. People with cataracts have generally indistinct vision, and see things through a 'foggy window'.

How to interact appropriately with people who have visual impairments

- Identify yourself when you approach.
- Never touch a person with a visual impairment without warning, unless it is an emergency.
- Ask IF help is needed, and if so, HOW you can best help. DON'T make assumptions!
- Offer your arm (the elbow) to guide the person, if it is wanted.
- Never touch, talk to, or otherwise distract a guide dog.
- When giving directions be precise and clear.
- Don't shout, and don't talk down.
- Look at the person while speaking to him/her.
- Don't assume the individual can't see you.
- Tell anyone using a guide dog what you are doing before opening a door.
- Don't walk away without saying good-bye.
- Don't leave anyone in the middle of a room. Show them to a chair, or guide them to stand by a wall, door, etc.
- Be patient, things may take a little longer.

b) What you need to know about People who are Deaf, deafened or hard of hearing

About the disability...

Several terms are used to describe people who have hearing loss: hard of hearing, Deaf, deafened and hearing-impaired. The last term is the least popular, and people who are Deaf, deafened or hard of hearing do not use it. As in the case with other disabilities, hearing loss has a wide variety of causes and degrees. Remember that people who are affected do not hear the way the average person does, and they may require assistive devices when communicating.

How to interact appropriately with people who are Deaf, deafened or hard of hearing

- Be sure to have the person's attention before speaking. The best way is a gentle tap on the person's shoulder, if he/she is not facing you.
- NEVER yell or exaggerate your speech.
- Use alternate communication methods if it is necessary. Ask what method is preferred, i.e. pen and paper.
- Look directly at the person to whom you are speaking.
- Don't make assumptions about the level of intellect or hearing.

- Don't put anything in front of your mouth
- Be clear and precise when giving directions, and repeat or rephrase if necessary. Make sure you have been understood.
- If there is a "hearing ear" dog, do not pet, feed or distract the animal.
- Review Subsections 1. f) and g) relating to TTY and Bell Relay
- Make sure that all assistive devices are properly installed and working.
- Do not show impatience. Communication for people who are Deaf is different because their first language is often not English, but Sign Language.

c) What you need to know about People who are deafblind

About people who are deafblind...

A deafblind person is one who has lost both sight and hearing. This results in greater difficulties in accessing information and pursuing goals. Most people who are deafblind will be accompanied by an intervener, a professional who facilitates communication.

Interveners are trained in special sign language that involves touching the hands of the client in a two hand, manual alphabet or finger spelling. There are also a number of other communications methods (auditory, visual, and tactile) that the intervener will facilitate. He/she may also guide and interpret for the client.

How to interact appropriately with people who are deafblind

- Identify yourself, and gently touch a hand or arm when you approach.
- Never touch a deafblind person suddenly, unless it is an emergency.
- Use alternate communication methods if it is necessary.
- If there is an intervener, look at and speak to the person who is deafblind.
- Don't make assumptions about the level of intellect, hearing or vision.
- Don't shout or gesture wildly.
- Be clear and precise when giving directions, and repeat or rephrase if necessary.
- Never interfere with a deafblind person's guide dog.
- An intervener is a very highly trained professional. This person should be treated with the respect you would give to any other professional - i.e. doctor, lawyer, dentist, etc., and not as an attendant or servant.

d) **What you need to know about People with Physical Disabilities**

About the disability...

There are many types and degrees of physical disabilities and not all of these disabilities require the use of a wheelchair. This category includes people who have arthritis, heart or lung conditions, amputations, and Little People.

People with speech impairment: This category includes people who stutter, as well as those who have cerebral palsy, hearing loss, or other conditions that make it difficult to pronounce words. Speech impairments come in many degrees. Some people who have severe difficulties may use communication boards or other assistive devices.

How to interact appropriately with people who have physical disabilities

- Speak directly to the person, NOT to the attendant.
- Ask IF and HOW you can best help.
- Take the time to understand.
- Avoid touching any assistive devices, including wheelchairs, unnecessarily.
- Provide information about accessible features of the immediate environment if appropriate. (the location of automatic doors, accessible washrooms, etc.).

When Communicating With Anyone Who Has a Speech Impairment

- Don't assume an intellectual disability.
- Don't pretend you've understood if you haven't
- Do ask the person to repeat what you don't understand.
- Ask questions that can be answered 'yes' or 'no'.
- **Be Patient!** The speech may be slow and difficult, but that does not mean it won't be worth waiting for!

e) **What you need to know about People with Psychiatric Disabilities**

Adapted from Boston University Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation, "What is Psychiatric Disability and Mental Illness?"

About the disability...

Psychiatric disability is also referred to as mental illness. Usually you will not be aware of the state of someone's mental health, unless you are informed of it. The term 'psychiatric disability' is used when mental illness significantly interferes with the performance of major life activities, such as learning, working and communicating, among others.

How to interact appropriately with people who have psychiatric disabilities

- Create a climate of confidence; remain calm and relaxed as you do with all clients. If you respond in a panicky fashion, it could create or escalate a situation. Avoid reacting with negativity, keep an open mind and treat the person as an adult.
- Take the person seriously, and avoid confrontation. Accept him or her as an individual, and avoid grouping all people with psychiatric disability (mental illness) together.
- Pay attention to non-verbal clues. You may notice someone breathing rapidly, pacing, perspiring, etc., and should recognize these signs of anxiety. If you are aware of an anxiety disorder, you may be able to help.
- If someone appears to be in a crisis, ask how to help.
- When speaking with the individual, keep your voice low and calm.

f) What you need to know about People with Intellectual Disabilities

About the disability...

Intellectual disability is intellectual development and capacity that is significantly below average. It involves a permanent limitation in a person's ability to learn, with effects ranging from mild to profound. The vast majority, 80% are in the mildly affected range.

People with intellectual disabilities have difficulty, sometimes severe, doing many things we take for granted. The emphasis must be placed on what each person can achieve.

Many people who have intellectual disabilities were born without the disability, but developed it later in life due to an illness or accident. Try as much as possible to treat any person with an intellectual disability like everyone else. He/she may be able to understand more than you realize, and will appreciate your behaviour.

How to interact appropriately with people who have intellectual disabilities

- Use simple words.
- Keep sentences short.
- Verify that the message has been understood.
- Be prepared to repeat and rephrase your sentences.
- Give one piece of information at a time.
- Maintain a polite attitude.
- Don't make assumptions about what anyone might be able to do.

- Don't show impatience.

g) What you need to know about People with Learning Disabilities

About the disability...

Up to twenty percent of the population has a learning disability. Many go undiagnosed for years, with the people making constant, unconscious accommodations. Learning disabilities have nothing to do with intelligence or psychiatric conditions - many very bright, successful professionals have learning disabilities.

These conditions can affect concentration, sequencing, memory, personality, the ability to read, write or count, take notes, follow directions, or sit in a noisy room. Learning disabilities should be diagnosed through sophisticated testing administered by a psychiatrist or clinical psychologist.

How to interact appropriately with people who have learning disabilities

- If you are told that a learning disability is present, ask for the best techniques to accommodate the person's needs.
- Become accustomed to providing information in the format and structure that is most effective and appropriate for the individual.
- Avoid trying to 'cure' this disability. That cannot be done, but there are techniques for helping people with learning disabilities to learn, work and function effectively in society.

h) What you need to know about Service Animals

People with disabilities may use service animals for a variety of reasons. The most commonly recognized service animals are dogs that assist people who are blind or have low vision. Service animals may also be used to alert people who are deaf or hard of hearing, or to alert an individual to an oncoming seizure.

Service animals can also be used to help people with autism, mental health disabilities, physical disabilities, or other disabilities.

How to interact appropriately with people who use service animals

- Allow service animals to accompany and assist the person with a disability at all times, unless they are specifically excluded by law.
- Recognize that service animals are not always dogs. If you are unsure about a particular animal, you can request a letter certifying that it is a service animal signed by a physician or nurse.
- Never touch, talk to, or otherwise distract a service animal.

- If a service animal is not being kept under the control of its owner and is causing a disruption, you may ask that the animal be removed from the premises.

i) What you need to know about Support Persons:

People with disabilities may use support persons to assist them. A support person can be a Personal Support Worker, a volunteer, a family member or a friend.

How to interact appropriately with people who use support persons

- Allow support persons to accompany and assist the person with a disability at all times.
- If an admission fee is being charged for a service, program or event, make sure that the admission fee for "support persons" is also advertised.
- Speak directly to the person with a disability, not the support person.
- Look at the person with a disability while you are speaking with them.

j) What you need to know about Personal Assistive Devices

Assistive devices enable people with disabilities to participate more fully in day-to-day activities. Wheelchairs, walkers, canes, glasses and hearing aids are all examples of personal assistive devices. These devices are part of people's personal space, and should not be interfered with.

The City also provides several assistive devices for public use, which are listed in this documentation package.

How to interact appropriately with people who use personal assistive devices

- Do not touch or move a personal assistive device without permission.
- Make sure that people are able to keep their assistive devices with them and make use of them.
- Become familiar with the list of assistive devices that the City provides.
- Know how to operate any assistive devices provided by the City that you may need to use in the course of your duties.

3. Procedures

a) Accommodation of Service Animals:

Employee interaction with service animals is likely to be limited, as they should remain under the control of their owner at all times. When preparing for longer meetings or events, accommodation for service animals is recommended.

- i) Ask that people who are planning to bring a service animal to a meeting advise ahead of time of any special needs, such as a water bowl for the animal.
- ii) Ask that people who use exotic service animals keep them under their control, and that they bring documentation signed by a physician or nurse to certify that the animal is used as a service animal.

b) Service Disruptions:

Official notice templates to be used in the event of any service disruption are included in this documentation package. There are two formats, one where the disruption is planned, and one where it is unexpected.

Service disruptions could include such things as a power failure, elevator or lift maintenance, anything limiting access to City facilities, sidewalk closures and detours, TTY malfunction, or an accessible washroom closure.

In the event of a planned service disruption, the following steps must be taken:

- i) Signage will be posted at least two (2) days prior to the planned disruption on-site and at the building entrance where applicable.
- ii) The Corporate Services Department will be informed of the disruption for posting to the City's accessible website at least two (2) days prior the planned disruption. This may be done by submitting a "help ticket" to have the event, anticipated duration, alternative services available, and contact posted.
- iii) Employees working in the general area, or along an accessible route to the location of the disruption will be advised of alternative services available, and will be encouraged to offer assistance to anyone experiencing difficulty, or likely to experience difficulty resulting from the disruption.

In the event of an unexpected temporary disruption in service, the following steps must be taken:

- i) Signage will be posted on-site, and at the building entrance where applicable.
- ii) The Corporate Services Department will be informed of the disruption for posting to the City's accessible website as soon as possible. This may be done by submitting a "help ticket" to have

the event, anticipated duration, alternative services available, and contact posted.

- iii) Employees working in the general area, or along an accessible route to the location of the disruption will be advised of alternative services available, and will be encouraged to offer assistance to anyone experiencing difficulty, or likely to experience difficulty resulting from the disruption. Employees should always ask, and wait to receive a positive response before providing assistance to someone with a disability.

c) External Organization Accessibility Training

Private businesses, organizations and contractors providing services to the public on behalf of the City are also required to provide accessible customer service to people with disabilities in accordance with Ontario Regulation 429/07. Organizations and contractors will source and obtain their own training.

- i) The City will provide a copy of this document to each private business, organization and contractor providing services, and will advise them that they are required to comply with the City's policies, practices and procedures set out herein when delivering service to the public on behalf of the City.
- ii) The City will ensure that the following text is included in every agreement made with contracted employees, third party employees, agents and others that provide service to the public on behalf of the City:

“In accordance with Ontario Regulation 429/07, Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Section 6, every provider of goods and services shall ensure that every person who deals with members of the public or participates in the developing of the service providers policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to members of the public, shall be trained on the following:

1. How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability.
2. How to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a guide animal, or a support person.

3. How to use equipment that is available on the premises that may help in the provision of goods or services.
4. What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the provider's goods or services.
5. Information on the policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to people with disabilities.

Contracted employees, third party employees, agents and others that provide customer service on behalf of the City of Belleville must meet the requirements of Ontario Regulation 429/07 with regard to training.

A document describing the training policy, a summary of the contents of the training and details of training dates and attendees must be submitted to the City of Belleville upon request.

Contact the City's Purchasing Section for suppliers of Customer Service Training."

d) Feedback Process

A feedback process has been established through the City's accessible website in order to receive feedback on the City's services from people with disabilities. A form has been launched that directs comments and feedback to a designated employee for follow-up where requested, generally within one week of receiving the feedback.

An official feedback form template and feedback tracking sheet are included in this documentation package.

- i) Forms are made available on the City's accessible website, and at service counters at City Hall and the Quinte Sports Centre. Feedback tracking cover-sheets will also be made available for employee use at service counters at City Hall and the Quinte Sports Centre.
- ii) Persons wishing to leave feedback on the City's programs and services for people with disabilities are to be directed to the available forms.
- iii) Where a person with a disability is unable to complete a written form or submit comments using the online form, staff needs to discuss what format would be suitable for their use. The use of the feedback form is not mandatory, and comments may be received in writing without the use of the form, or in other formats, such as on

CD or DVD, by e-mail, through TTY or fax, or verbally (either in person, or by telephone).

- iv) Feedback will be affixed with an appropriate tracking sheet identifying the date, time, and location where it was received and the employee who received the information. It will then be forwarded to the City's Special Projects Planner for recording, and follow-up where appropriate.
- v) Where follow-up is requested and complete contact information is provided, the Special Projects Planner will contact the person who left the feedback to advise them of actions to be taken in response to their comments (wherever possible within one week). The staff member will also contact affected Departments to advise them of the comments, and to request information and follow-up on actions to be taken.
- vi) The information collected from the feedback process will be summarized and presented to the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee on a quarterly basis, or as appropriate given the volume of feedback received.

e) Availability of Documents

Notice of the availability of the documents required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O. Reg. 429/07 ("required documents") must be provided on the City's accessible website.

f) Format of Documents

In the event that the format of available printed documents is not useful to someone who has requested a copy, staff should seek to provide the information in an alternate format that is accessible to the customer. The preferred format would be one which provides the information in a useable format to the person while making the best use of City resources. For example, someone with a visual disability may be able to receive the information in a specified format via e-mail and have their computer read it to them at home.

g) Using Bell Relay Service

To contact someone who uses a TTY through Bell Relay, employees must:

- i) call 1-800-855-0511 to speak to an operator;
- ii) give the operator their name, area code and telephone number;
- iii) give the name, area code and telephone number of the person they are calling;
- iv) SPEAK SLOWLY so the operator can type what they are saying;

- v) The operator will place the call and tell them to go ahead when the person they are calling answers.
- vi) Speak to the operator as if you were talking directly to the person you are calling. For example, say "Hi, How are you doing?"

Do not say: "Tell him I said hello." Remember to say "Go Ahead" when you are finished speaking, so the person on the other end will know it is his/her turn to speak. The Relay operators are like sign language interpreters, in that they are professionals who will not betray confidences. They will not relay profanity or threats, but will relay marriage proposals and other personal conversations.

PART C - Supplementary Practices for TTY use under O. Reg. 429/07

Adapted from DBTAC Southwest ADA Centre in Houston, Texas, June 2009

1. Using a TTY

This device is also referred to as a Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) or a Text Telephone.

2. TTY Instruction Sheet

This practice describes how to handle TTY calls and gives a list of TTY abbreviations and syntax often used by persons with speech and hearing impairments.

If your TTY phone is also used for voice calls, be sure the person who answers your phone by voice knows how to recognize and answer a TTY call. Usually a TTY call can be identified by a voice announcer saying, "this is a TTY call," or a high-pitched, electronic, beeping sound. However, some TTYs do not have voice announcers or make the beeping sound or the person calling may forget to tap the space bar to produce it. Therefore, if you hear no voice, assume it is a TTY call.

TTYs should be placed near a telephone so there is minimal delay in answering TTY calls. Further, this phone should be accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities, including those who use wheelchairs.

3. Receiving and Concluding a TTY Call

- a) Place the phone receiver in the receiver cradle of your TTY adapter. (For correct receiver placement, note picture, notch, or the word "cord.") Turn your TTY on.
- b) The person who answers the call is the first to type. Type your agency name and your name. Then type "GA."
- c) "GA" means go ahead and type. This is the signal for the other person to begin typing. "HD" means hold. This is the signal that the person typing must stop for a minute, but he/she will be back. In fact, do not leave the phone unless you first type "HD." "SK" means stop keying. This is how you show that the conversation is ended and that you will hang up. It is polite to type good-bye, thank you for calling, or some other closing remark before you type "SK."

Some sample opening and closing messages are:

Hello, City of Belleville, this is Jane Smith, may I help u? GA

Engineering and Development Services, Ms. Smith here. May I help u? GA

Good AM, this is Ms. Smith at the City of Belleville. GA

Thank u for calling, bye to SK or GA
Have a good day. GA to SK

Because of the amount of time it takes to send and receive messages, it's important to remember that short words and sentences are desired by both parties (*see list of common TTY terminology below*).

Please Note:

With TTY calls you will not be able to interrupt when the other person is typing. Sometimes you may get a garbled message in all numbers or mixed numbers and letters. You should strike the space bar and see if the message clears up. If not, when the person stops typing, you should say, "Message all garbled, please repeat." If the garbled messages continue, this may mean that one of the TTYs is not working properly or that you have a bad connection. In this case you should say something like, "Let's hang up and you call me back or I'll call you back."

4. Making a TTY Call

- a) Again, place the phone receiver securely in the TTY receiver cradle and turn on your TTY. Make sure you have a dial tone by checking for a steady light on the TTY status indicator.
- b) Dial the number and watch the status indicator light to see if the dialed number is ringing. The ring will make a long slow flash or two short flashes with a pause in between. If the line is busy, you will see short, continuous flashes on your indicator light. When the phone is answered, you will see an irregular light signal as the phone is picked up and placed in the cradle. If you are calling a combination TTY and voice number, and do not have a voice announcer on your TTY, you should tap the space bar several times to help the person on the other end identify this as a TTY call.

Please Note:

If your call is not answered via TTY after 10 to 15 seconds, you should again tap the space bar to let the person know that it is a TTY call. If you still receive no answer, this could mean one of several things. You may have dialed an incorrect number, or your call did not go through. A signal on your monitor light that someone is speaking may mean you have reached a recorded message.

5. Additional Information

If you make a mistake in spelling, you can either type "xxx" and then retype the correct spelling or use the *Back Space* key to delete the misspelled word(s).

To type numbers on some TTYS, you may have to use the *Shift* key. Consult your TTY manual for specific operating instructions.

The message of some TTY callers may appear to be in nonstandard English. Please do not mistake this as a lack of intelligence on the part of the caller. Instead, it may be due to differences between hearing and deaf cultures or the use of TTY terminology. Extend the same patience and courtesy to TTY callers as you do to all others.

Common TDD Terminology

Afternoon/Evening **PM**

Operator **OPR**

Although **THO**

Pause (thinking) **HMMM**

Are **R**

Please **PLS**

Because **CUZ**

Question **Q**

Center **CTR**

See you later **CUL**

Could **CUD**

Should **SHUD**

Go ahead (your turn, to type) **GA**

Stop keying (end of conversation) **SK**

Hold **HD**

To show appreciation **SMILE**

Meeting **MTG**

Tomorrow **TMR**

Morning **AM**

Would **WUD**

Number **NBR**

You **U**

Oh, I see **OIC**

Your **UR**

PART D - Supplementary Practices for Planning Accessible Meetings under O. Reg. 429/07

Adapted from DAWN Ontario, June 2009

1. Introduction

Two important areas need to be considered when arranging accessible meetings – physical access to the meeting space and access to the meeting contents and proceedings.

Advance planning can help to ensure that the accommodation needs of people with disabilities are anticipated and acted upon ahead of time. Even when you may not know in advance whether any of your participants need accommodations, you should be prepared to arrange your meeting or event to be accessible so that people with disabilities can participate independently.

Short workshops, information sessions, focus groups, media conferences or events of a few hours in duration may not require the same detailed preparations that lengthy conferences or conventions require, such as determining dietary requirements when planning menus and arranging overnight guest rooms. However, many of the same pre-event planning steps apply to both.

This resource is meant to assist in the planning process and reflects an optimal level of accessibility. Some facilities may not meet all of the criteria outlined in the document. If you are in doubt about the level of accessibility at a potential venue, it is recommended that you consult with a local disability group who has expertise in barrier free access and/or meeting planning.

2. General Accessibility Considerations

- The meeting organizer will be responsible for making the event accessible.
- Be prepared to respond to accommodation requests in the same manner that you respond to other requests and questions about the event.
- Ensure that the invitation or notice of meeting includes information about the accessibility of the event.
- Schedule sign language interpreters and/or captionist as soon as possible after confirming the date of the event.

3. Choosing a Location

- Become familiar with the location under consideration in order to determine its level of accessibility before you book your event.
- If unfamiliar with the location, input may be sought from a credible local disability organization with expertise in barrier-free access.
- Inquire about recent renovations or current construction that may have an impact on accessibility.
- Determine whether the staff at the location has been sufficiently trained in disability awareness.

4. Exterior Access

The following should be considered in determining the suitability of a preferred location.

a) Signage

- Are the signs for the street address or building name clearly visible from the street?
- Are the signs are well lit during evening events?

b) Parking

- Are there a reasonable numbers of accessible parking spots available for the estimated number of attendees with disabilities? If not, can arrangements be made with the owners of the meeting facility to permit additional spaces to be used for designated parking close to the building for the duration of the event?
- Are the designated parking spots for people with disabilities on a firm, slip-resistant surface and located close to the entrance of the building?
- Is there a curb cut or level access provided from the parking area to the main entrance?
- Has snow removal been arranged during winter events?
- Is there accessible public parking available close by the meeting facility when a large number of attendees with disabilities are expected?

c) Sidewalks/Path of Travel

- Is there a barrier free path of travel from the parking lot or drop off area to the meeting entrance? Such a path must avoid stairs, sudden changes in level, slippery or unstable ground, and objects obstructing the path of travel.
- Has snow been removed from the path of travel during winter events?
- Do any ramps have a gradual slope and handrails on both sides?

- Are sidewalks clearly separated from the road and driveway for safety reasons?

d) Accessible Transit

- Is the location serviced by accessible or parallel transit services?
- Is there a drop-off area available in front of the building? A covered drop-off area is preferred.

5. Interior Access

The following should be considered in determining the suitability of a preferred location, and in planning an event:

a) Entrances and Lobbies

- Is an accessible entrance is available with all doorways wide enough for the passage of a person using a wheelchair or scooter? Access through the main entrance is highly desirable.
- If the main entrance is NOT accessible, ensure there is a clearly visible sign at the front of the building indicating the location of the accessible entrance.
- Are entrances well lit and not located in isolated areas?
- Do entrances lead to locked doors with buzzers or bells that must be pushed to permit access? This is not desirable for a public meeting location.
- Are door handles easy to open without individuals having to twist their wrist? Ideally, doors should have lever handles and be equipped with an automatic door opener.
- Provide signs indicating where the meeting is taking place within the building.
- Ensure that the signs are large enough and clear enough to be read by people with low vision.
- Make sure the signs are mounted at a comfortable height for both people who use wheelchairs and people with low vision.
- Will Staff or volunteers be available at doorways and throughout the facility to direct or assist people with disabilities to the meeting location?

b) Elevators

- Are elevators located close to the meeting facilities, and large enough to hold power wheelchair and/or scooter users?
- Are there enough elevators to safely and conveniently transport the number of people using mobility devices attending the meeting?
- Are lifts safe and easy to operate with enough space to accommodate both wheelchair and scooter users?

- Have Braille buttons and raised numerals have been provided to assist people who are blind or have low vision?
- Are elevator controls are mounted at a comfortable height for a person using a wheelchair or scooter?
- Does the elevator have an auditory signal to alert people who are blind or have low vision?
- Does the elevator have a visual cue system in each elevator lobby to alert people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing?

c) Accessible Washrooms

- Are washrooms large enough to accommodate scooter and power wheelchair users, and are they equipped with at least one accessible stall?
- Do washroom doors have a raised (tactile) male or female sign or Braille lettering?
- Does the location have at least one accessible unisex washroom on the same floor as the event? A minimum of a five-foot turning radius is needed for wheelchair users to manoeuvre without restriction.
- Are the faucets reachable by a person using a wheelchair or scooter and can they be operated using one hand?
- Are other washroom accessories and dispensers within easy reach of a person using a wheelchair or scooter?
- Are the accessible washrooms located in close proximity to the meeting rooms?

d) Hallways and Corridors

- Are major hallways and essential doorways throughout the facility wide enough to permit the passage of people using wheelchair and scooters?
- Are interior doors are easy to open with one hand without twisting the wrist?
- Has low pile carpeting, hardwood flooring or tile been used as the floor finish to ensure that a wheelchair or scooter user can travel easily throughout the facility?

e) Meeting and Conference Rooms

- It is preferable for the meeting room to be located on the building entry floor.
- Is the boardroom or meeting room large enough to provide circulation and seating for an adequate or anticipated number of participants who use wheelchair, scooters, guide dogs or other mobility aids?
- Is accessible seating is available throughout the meeting space?

- Are any reception/refreshment areas in an area large enough to provide circulation for participants who use wheelchairs, scooters, guide dogs or other mobility aids?
- Are stages and speaking areas, including lectern or podium accessible to wheelchair and scooter users?
- Is there a well-lit space provided for the sign language interpreter when interpreters will be present?
- Check for noise levels (ventilation systems, noise from adjacent rooms etc.) which may be distracting.
- Check to see that the meeting room has appropriate requirements (drapes, blinds, etc.) to provide reduction of light or glare from windows.
- Are cables, wires and microphones well secured and arranged to not block traffic?
- Have guest speakers and exhibitors been reminded to be prepared to provide printed handout materials in alternative formats should alternative formats be requested in advance?

6. Additional Accessibility Considerations

- Investigate the availability of installed or portable FM Listening Systems in meeting facilities for people who have a hearing loss. (An FM system consists of a transmitter used by the speaker and a receiver used by the listener.)
- Investigate the availability of telephones with auditory adjustments for people who have a hearing loss.
- Check to determine whether there are visual fire alarms. If not, inquire about the facility's evacuation plan or create your own.
- Is a TTY available?
- Is the website used to advertise the meeting or conference available in a format that is accessible to people who use screen readers?
- Is there at least one telephone that can be used by a person who is seated?
- Are customer service areas (i.e., counters, display tables, etc.) low enough for wheelchair or scooter users to see over?
- Are all meeting or event-specific signs created in large print?
- Determine a suitable relieving area for guide dogs.
- Be prepared to provide water bowls for guide dogs during longer events if needed.

7. Invitations and Promotional Materials

- Invitations should be provided in alternate formats for people or organizations that require or request it (i.e., Braille, on tape, via e-mail, in large print, on computer disk).
- The invitation and promotional materials should invite participants to request any additional requirements they may have in order to fully participate in the

meeting or conference. The following sample notice may be used or modified as necessary:

“It is the policy of the City to ensure that communications with participants and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. Anyone with a disability who requires an accommodation, a modification of policies or procedures, or an auxiliary aid or service in order to participate in this meeting should contact the organizer, _____ at _____, TTY _____ or by e-mail at _____ as soon as possible but not later than 48 hours (not including weekends or holidays) before the scheduled meeting. The City will give primary consideration to the choice of auxiliary aid or service requested by the individual with disability. If you need an alternate format of the agenda or any information provided at said meeting, please contact the organizer listed above 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting.”

8. Multiple Format Communications

It is important to consider the communication needs of your whole audience when preparing your meeting or conference, and accessibility is one important component of your communication plan. However, accessibility to print is not the only need you must take into consideration. It is important to make any oral presentation available to people who are deaf through a qualified sign language interpreter. Print materials need to be made available in formats readily accessible to people who are print disabled.

When preparing for any public event, with or without a disability focus, it is suggested that you:

- Arrange for a sign language interpreter and/or captionist to be present.
- Promote the fact that your materials are available in alternative formats and provide contact information on how to obtain these formats in advertising ahead of time, and on printed materials.
- Display and have available for distribution materials prepared in alternative formats.
- Adjust the numbers of multiple format documents you will need according to the anticipated audience. For example, if the anticipated audience consists of seniors, you may consider producing a greater number of printed materials in large print.
- The following is a guideline for quantities for an event such as a trade show or exhibit:

- o 1 Braille copy for display
 - o 3 Braille copies for distribution
 - o 1 large print copy for display
 - o 8 large print copies for distribution
 - o 1 audio cassette for display with large print/Braille labels. Consider CD ROM format in addition to tape.
 - o 7 audio cassettes for distribution with large print/Braille labels. Consider CD ROM format in addition to tape.
 - o 1 computer disk for display with large print/Braille labels. Consider CD ROM format in addition to disk.
 - o 7 computer disks for distribution with large print/Braille labels. Consider CD ROM format in addition to disk.
 - o For small sized promotional materials such as a bookmark, copies are available with Braille overlay indicating the name of the document and contact information. For an anticipated audience size of 500 attendees, 250 copies.
- Respond to specific customer's requests for preferred alternative formats by making post-event production and delivery arrangements if required.

The following description of various formats may be of assistance.

a) Computer Disk and CD ROM

These are used with computer synthetic voice technology (screen reading software) that enables people who are blind, have low vision (such as seniors) or who have learning disabilities to hear a spoken verbatim translation of what others see on the monitor. There is a growing demand for computer disks and CD ROM. The disks should be labeled in large print and Braille.

b) Large Print

An alternative format for people who have low vision that can be created in-house by using word processing software with a font size that is 14 points or larger or can be out sourced to a vendor.

c) Braille Translation

An alternative format for people who are blind or Deaf-blind produced using Braille transcription software.

d) Audio Cassette

An alternative format for people who have a visual impairment or learning disability and are unable to read print. This appears to a popular alternative format. Labels should be prepared in large print and Braille.

e) Descriptive Video Service

Descriptive Video Service (DVS) provides descriptive narration of key visual elements -- the action, characters, locations, costumes, and sets -- without interfering with dialog or sound effects, making television programs, feature films, home videos and other visual media accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired.

9. Communication Supports

Communication Support services help people with disabilities access information presented orally at meetings, conferences, and public events. In pre-event planning, notices should ask participants to advise the organizer if they require any special accommodations.

a) Sign Language Interpreters

An Interpreter's service is necessary whenever clear communication is required between deaf and (non-signing) hearing people. It is recommended that an interpreter be available at booths at events, meetings or presentations attended by people with disabilities who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.

b) Computerized Note Takers (also known as Print Interpreters)

Computerized note taking is a support service requested by deaf, deafened and hard of hearing consumers who prefer the print mode for their communication and participation needs. A computerized note taker, sometimes called a print interpreter, summarizes what is spoken while still maintaining accuracy and the spirit and intent of the speaker. Note Takers use a notebook or laptop computer with a standard keyboard and an overhead screen and/or TV. Computerized note taking is not a verbatim print representation of the spoken material.

c) Real-Time Note Takers/Captionist

Real-time captioning is a support service requested by deaf, deafened and hard of hearing consumers who prefer the print mode for their

communication and participation needs. A real-time (verbatim) captionist uses a court reporting steno machine, coded to type verbatim text with minimal keystrokes as he/she is listening.

10. Attendant Care

Attendant care services to people with disabilities include assistance with personal care and escorting to community outings. To ensure that adequate arrangements are made, ask the participant about the level and type of service required. Clearly describe the specific needs of the participant to the vendor.