



## THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF RAMARA POLICY

DEPARTMENT: CORPORATE SERVICES DEPT

POLICY: **ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY** PAGE 1 OF 5

### **Statement:**

To provide Ramara citizens with disabilities with accessible goods and services in a manner consistent with the following principles:

- Independence
- Dignity
- Integration
- Equality of opportunity.

Goods and services provided to persons with disabilities will be integrated wherever possible and persons with disabilities shall benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar manner as other customers.

### **Purpose:**

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA) is Provincial legislation designed to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025, by developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards.

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service is the first regulation to come into force under the AODA on January 1, 2008 and must be implemented by municipalities on or before January 1, 2010. The Customer Service Standard requires municipalities to establish policies, practices and procedures on providing goods and services to people with disabilities and must address the following:

- The provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities
- The use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities;
- The use of service animals by persons with disabilities;
- The use of support persons by persons with disabilities;
- Notice of temporary disruptions in services and facilities;
- Training;
- Customer feedback regarding the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities;
- Notice of availability and format of documents and meetings.

APPROVAL DATE: November 9, 2009

REVISION DATE:

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2010

SUPERCEDES POLICY NO:



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### **Application:**

This policy shall apply to Members of Council, all Township employees, as well as volunteers, agents or contractors who act on behalf of or represent the Corporation in any manner. This will also apply to members and volunteers of all Ramara Township Committees and Boards including the Ramara Public Library Board and its employees and volunteers.

### **Implementation:**

The Township of Ramara shall use reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles:

- The goods or services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of person with disabilities
- The provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities, and others, 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
- Persons with disabilities will be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods or services
- Persons with disabilities may use assistive devices and/or support persons in the access of goods and services.
- The Township of Ramara employees when communicating with a person with a disability shall do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

### **Guide Dogs/Service Animals**

Any person with a disability accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal will be permitted to enter the premises with the animal and keep it with him/her, unless the animal is otherwise excluded from the premises by law.

If the service animal is excluded from the premises by law, the Township will look to other available measures to allow the person with the disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services.

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### Support Persons

When a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, both are permitted to enter together and are not prevented from having access to each other while on the premises. It may be a requirement of the Township that a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person in order to protect the health and safety of the person with a disability while on the premises.

Where fees for goods or services are required as admission to the premises the Township will provide advance notice regarding the amount payable, if any, in respect of support persons.

### Disruption of Services

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in a facility or service usually used by persons with disabilities, the Township shall give notice of the disruption to the public. The notice shall include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and provide alternatives, if available.

### Feedback Process

The public is permitted to provide feedback on accessibility of the provision of goods and services by telephone or in person through the Customer Care Call Centre; correspondence; and the Annual Accessibility Public Meeting.

### Assistive Devices

Persons with disabilities are permitted to use personal assistive devices in order to access goods or services of the Township. The Township may also provide assistive devices if available in order that persons with disabilities may access the goods or services.

### Training for Staff

The following staff shall receive training on the provision of its goods or services to persons with disabilities:

- Everyone who deals with the public or other third parties on behalf of the Township, whether as an employee, contractor, agent, volunteer or otherwise;

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- Everyone who participates in the developing of policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to members of the public or other third parties.

### **Definitions:**

*Guide Dog or Service Animal* means any dog or animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability

*Support Person* means any person, whether professional, volunteer, family member or friend who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communications, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services

*Township* means the Corporation of the Township of Ramara

### **Exclusions:**

This policy is excluded during an emergency situation where the health and safety of the person with a disability is in jeopardy.

### **Policy Authority:**

Council shall be the approval authority for the Accessible Customer Service Policy.

### **References and Related Policies:**

<http://www.accessibilitytoolbox.com/home.asp>

<http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page157.aspx>

<http://www.accesson.ca/ado/english/>

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### **Consequences of Non-Compliance:**

The AODA is Provincial legislation and every person who is guilty of an offence under the AODA is liable on conviction:

- To a fine of not more than \$50,000 for each day or part day on which the offence occurs or continues to occur; or
- If the person is a corporation, to a fine of not more than \$100,000 for each day or part day on which the offence occurs or continues to occur.

### **Review Cycle:**

This policy shall be reviewed annually at the Annual Public Meeting on Accessibility. Recommendations will be reviewed by senior staff and approved by Council as soon as practical after the annual public meeting held on the last Thursday in October of each year.

### **Strategic Issues:**

Strategic issues that apply to this policy include Community Harmony, Economic Development, Municipal Services and Safety and Security.

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## PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES CUSTOMER SERVICE

### **GUIDE DOGS/SERVICE ANIMALS**

Persons with disabilities will be allowed to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal unless the animal is excluded by law. An explanation as to why the animal is excluded by law shall be explained to the person with the disability and other reasonable arrangements shall be explored with the assistance of the person with disability in order that the goods and services may be provided.

If a service animal is unruly or disruptive (jumping, biting, or other harmful behaviour), the person with the disability will be asked to remove the animal from the area or refuse access to the goods or services. With the assistance of the person with disabilities, other reasonable arrangements shall be explored to provide the goods or services.

Service Animals Dos and Don'ts:

- Permit service animals on premises except where excluded by law
- Do not interact with service animals without permission of the owner/handler
- Accept training certificate as proof of "service animal"
- Offer alternatives, with assistance of person with disability, when animal prohibited by law

### **SUPPORT PERSONS**

Persons with disabilities may be accompanied by their support person while accessing goods or services. In the event that admission fees are charged, advance notice of the fees shall be posted in a conspicuous place.

Support Persons Dos and Don'ts:

- Permit support persons on premises
- Provide notice of any admission fees
- Speak directly to person with disability not to the support person

### **ASSISTIVE DEVICES**

Reasonable efforts will be used to allow persons with disabilities to use their own assistive devices to access goods and/or services.

Assistive Devices Do's and Don'ts:

- Permit assistive devices on premises
- Do not interfere with them without permission of owner/user
- Inform people of their availability
- Train staff in their use including any health & safety training

## **DISRUPTION OF SERVICES**

A notice of disruption of service shall include the following:

- reason for disruption
- anticipated duration of the disruption
- a description of alternative facilities or services, if any

Notice shall be given as follows:

- post in a conspicuous place on the premises of the goods or service
- post on the Township's website
- or by such other method as is reasonable under the circumstances.

## **FEEDBACK**

Feedback on accessibility may be provided by the public by using the following methods:

- In writing, by mail or delivered to the Clerk's Department
- By phone or in person, through the Customer Care Centre
- By email at [ramara@ramara.ca](mailto:ramara@ramara.ca)
- Annual Accessibility Public Meeting

The feedback should provide alternative suggestions that the Township could provide in order to provide the goods or services in an accessible manner as well as your contact information.

Once feedback is received:

- All feedback will be directed to the Clerk;
- Contact information is required
- If revisions to the Accessible Customer Care policies and/or procedures are required as a result of the feedback, the revisions shall be implemented as soon as practicable.
- If a revision requires significant investment (financial/capital, physical) the matter will be reviewed by the Department Head and if feasible, a plan will be developed to address the situation, subject to Council approval.

## **TRAINING**

The following staff shall receive training on the provisions of its goods or services to persons with disabilities:

- Everyone who deals with the public or other third parties on behalf of the Township, whether as an employee, contractor, agent, volunteer or otherwise;
- Everyone who participates in the developing of policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to members of the public or other third parties.

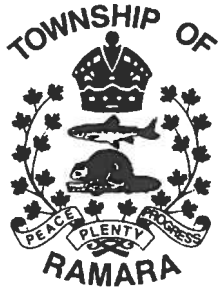
Training must include instruction on the following:

- A review of the Act and the requirements of the standard
- How to provide goods and services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities
- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices, guide dog or service animal; or a support person
- How to use equipment or devices provided by the Township that may help with the delivery of goods or services to persons with disabilities
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing a good or service.
- Process for providing feedback

Training – as soon as practicable after assignment of the applicable duties

Training – ongoing basis; policy changes





## NOTICE SERVICE DISRUPTION

There will be a scheduled disruption of service at \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

from \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_.

These disruptions include:

- *Repairs to doors*
- *Repairs to technology*

Alternative service provided \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

On behalf of the Township of Ramara we would like to thank you for your patience in this matter.

*Clerk  
Township of Ramara  
(705)484-5374 Ext. 222*



## NOTICE DISRUPTION IN SERVICE

There is currently an unscheduled disruption of service at \_\_\_\_\_ and will last until approximately \_\_\_\_\_.

These disruptions include:

- *Repairs to doors*
- *Repairs to technology*

Alternative service provided \_\_\_\_\_

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On behalf of the Township of Ramara we would like to thank you for your patience in this matter.

*Clerk*  
*Township of Ramara*  
*(705)484-5374 Ext. 222*



## CHOOSING THE RIGHT WORDS

### INSTEAD OF

Afflicted by cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, arthritis, etc

Aged (the)

Autistic

Birth defect, congenital defect, deformity

Blind (the), visually impaired (the)

Brain damaged

Confined to a wheelchair, wheelchair bound

Crazy, insane, lunatic, psycho, mental, mental patient, maniac, neurotic, psychotic, unsound mind, schizophrenic

Cripple, crippled, lame

Deaf (the), hearing impaired (the)

Deaf and dumb, deaf mute

Deaf-Blind (the)

Differently Abled

Disabled (the)

Elderly (the)

### PLEASE USE

Person who has cerebral palsy.  
Person who has multiple sclerosis.  
Person who has arthritis, etc.  
Person with a disability.

Seniors

A person with autism.  
A person who has autism.

A person who has a congenital disability.  
A person with a disability since birth.

A person who is blind.  
A person with a vision disability.  
A person with vision loss.  
A person with a visual impairment.  
A person with low vision.

A person with a brain injury.  
A person with a head injury.

A person who uses a wheelchair.

A person with a mental health disability.  
A person who has depression.  
A person with schizophrenia.

A person with a disability.  
A person with a mobility impairment or, more specifically, a person who walks with crutches.  
A person who uses a walker.  
A person who uses a mobility aid.  
A person with arthritis, etc.

A person who is deaf (person with profound hearing loss who communicates using sign language.)  
A person who is deafened (deaf later in life.)  
A person who is hard of hearing (person with hearing loss who communicates primarily by speech.)  
A person with a hearing loss.  
When referring to the deaf community and their culture (whose preferred mode of communication is sign language) it is acceptable to use "the Deaf."

A person who is deaf without speech.

Person who is deaf-blind (person who has any combination of visual and auditory impairments)

A person with a disability.

people with disabilities

Seniors, older adults.

Epileptic	Person who has epilepsy
Fits, Spells, Attacks	Seizures
Handicapped (the)	Person with a disability. The term handicapped may be used when referring to an environmental or attitudinal barrier as in "a person who is handicapped by a set of stairs leading to the entrance"
Hidden disability	Non-visible disability
Invalid	Person with a disability.
Learning disabled, learning disordered, the dyslexics	A person with a learning disability or people with learning disabilities
Mentally retarded, idiot, simple, retarded, feeble minded, imbecile	a person with an intellectual disability or people with learning disabilities
Midget, Dwarf	A person of short stature. A person who has a form of dwarfism. A little person. A person diagnosed with "Achondroplasia, SED, or whatever their specific diagnosis is", a form of dwarfism
Mongoloid, Mongolism	Person with down Syndrome. One can use this terminology only when it is directly relevant. A person with an intellectual or developmental disability
Normal	Person who is not disabled. Person who is able bodied. Specifically, a person who is sighted, a hearing person, a person who is ambulatory.
Patient	Person with a disability. The word patient may be used when referring to a relationship between a medical professional and a client.
Physically challenged	Person with a physical disability
Spastic	Person who has muscle spasms
Stutterer	A person with a speech impairment or impediment
Victim of/suffers from/stricken with cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, arthritis, etc.	Person who has cerebral palsy. Person who has multiple sclerosis, etc. Person with a disability.
Visually impaired (the)	A person with a visual impairment. A person with low vision. A person with vision loss. A person with a vision disability.