



POLICY – 3.0 Accessible Customer Service

Established: September 28, 2009

1. **Policy Statement**

The mission of the Corporation of the Town of Midland is to be a community committed to providing sound governance and accountability through a focus on service excellence. By implementing the procedures and practices contained in this policy, we remove barriers and increase accessibility to our goods and services for persons with disabilities.

2. **Purpose**

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, provides for the establishment of accessibility standards. Accordingly, Ontario Regulation 429/07, Accessible Standards for Customer Service was enacted. The Regulation requires the establishment of policies, procedures and practices governing the provision of our goods and services to persons with disabilities. These policies, procedures and practices must with reasonable effort ensure that independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity are respected.

3. **Definitions**

- (a) **“Assistive Devices”** shall include but not limited to wheelchairs, hearing aids, adaptive computer technologies, ventilators, walkers, crutches and personal sound amplification devices.
- (b) **“Barrier”** shall mean anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of the disability. Barriers may include physical, architectural, attitudinal, information, communication or technological barriers.
- (c) **“Guide Dog”** shall mean a guide dog as defined in Section 1 of the Blind Persons’ Rights Act.
- (d) **“Service Animal”** shall mean any animal where it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability or if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability. O.Reg.429/07, s.4(9).
- (e) **“Support Person”** shall mean, in relation to the person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communications, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services. O. Reg.429/07,s.4(8).

4. **Customer Service Policies, Practices and Procedures**

The Town of Midland will make reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the core principles of the standard:

- (a) **Dignity and Independence**– Customer service will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.
- (b) **Integrated Services** –Allow people with disabilities to fully benefit from the same services, in the same place and in the same or similar manner as other customers.
- (c) **Equal Opportunity** – People with disabilities will be given an equal opportunity to use and benefit from services.

5. **Communication**

Will be provided in a manner that takes into account an individual’s disability. Consideration is given to the way in which individuals express, receive and process information without making assumptions about a particular disability.

6. **Assistive Devices**

Assistive devices include specialized aids and devices that enable people with disabilities to carry out their everyday activities. The organization will make reasonable efforts to ensure that assistive devices can be used to access services.

7. **Use of Service Animals**

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties. Service animals shall be permitted entry to all facilities and meeting rooms which are open to the public.

We will also ensure that all staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

8. **Use of Support Persons**

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a person will be allowed to enter the Town of Midland premises with his or her support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on our premises.

- (a) **Fees:** Provided that the person with a disability is a paying participant, their accompanying support person will not be charged for admission to the Town of Midland’s premises, events or programs
- (b) **Request for Support:** The Town of Midland may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the Town’s premises, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises. If required, the person with a disability shall make arrangements for and cover the costs for the required support person.

9. **Notice of Temporary Disruption**

The Town of Midland will provide customers with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notice will be placed on the Town's website, as well as all public entrances and service counters on the affected premises and the Town Office. A sample is attached hereto as *Appendix 'A'*.

10. **Training**

(a) **Scope of Training:** The Town of Midland will provide training to Council, employees, Committee members, Board members and volunteers.

Training will include the following:

- the purposes of the Accessibility for *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the Customer Service Standard,
- how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities,
- how to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person,
- how to use equipment or devices available at our premises that may help people with disabilities,
- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing the Town's goods and services,
- the Town's policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard.

(b) **Timing of Training:** This training will be provided to all new Level 1 members on a quarterly basis. The Town will also provide ongoing training with respect to changes in policies, practices and procedures. The Human Resources Department will keep records of the training provided, including the dates and names of persons attending.

(c) **Level 1 Training - Municipal:** Individuals in the following positions will be provided with in-house training:

Council Members, Committee Members, Board Members, All Municipal Staff, and Volunteers.

- (d) **Level 2 Training - Third Parties & Contract Agencies:** The training requirement for the following individuals will be met by requiring that they provide copies of their policy and procedures regarding Accessible Customer Service to the municipality as proof of training being provided.

11. Feedback Process

The Town of Midland strives to provide exceptional customer service. The public can provide feedback on the accessibility of the provision of goods and services by contacting the Midland Accessibility Advisory Committee by:

- (a) email – kdesroches@midland.ca
- (b) phone – (705) 526-4275 ext 2208 TTY
- (c) in person – 575 Dominion Ave, Midland
- (d) mail – 575 Dominion Avenue
Midland ON
L4R 1R2

The Customer Feedback form has been attached hereto as *Appendix 'B'*. All feedback forms will be forwarded to K. Desroches, Resource/Secretary to the Midland Accessibility Advisory Committee and responses will be provided within seven business days provided that contact information is included on the form.

12. Modifications to this or other Policies

We are committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities; therefore, no change will be made to this policy prior the change being reviewed and approved by the Midland Accessibility Advisory Committee.

13. Notice of Availability of Documents

This policy and any other document deemed to be a key in the delivery of goods and services will be made available upon request in a format that takes into account the person's disability.

Notwithstanding the above, this policy will be made available on the Town's website and made available to any person to whom it provides goods or services by any other method or format as is reasonable in their circumstances

Appendix 'A'

Notice of Service Disruption



NOTICE OF SERVICE DISRUPTION

Type of disruption _____

Reason for disruption _____

The service disruption is located at _____

Duration of disruption _____

Alternative Facilities or Services (if applicable) _____

On behalf of the Town of Midland we would like to thank you for your patience and apologize for any inconvenience.

Thank you,

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF MIDLAND

Appendix 'B'
Customer Feedback Form



CUSTOMER FEEDBACK FORM

At the Town of Midland we value our customers and strive to meet everyone's needs. This completed form will assist us in determining if there are areas where we need to improve in order to serve you better.

Please tell us the date and time of your visit: _____

Did we respond to your customer service needs today? YES NO

Was our customer service provided to you in an accessible manner?
 YES SOMEWHAT NO (please explain below)

Did you have any problems accessing our goods and services?
 YES (please explain below) SOMEWHAT (please explain below) NO

Please add any other comments you may have: _____

Your contact information (optional): _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form, your comments are appreciated.

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF MIDLAND

Date Received: _____	Date Action Taken: _____
Action Taken: _____	