

ST. CLAIR TOWNSHIP

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

PURPOSE

To ensure all St. Clair Township programs and services are accessible to everyone in the community in accordance with Ontario Regulation 429/07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.

POLICY OVERVIEW

These policies and procedures apply to all goods and services that are delivered by St. Clair Township, by any means including in person, by telephone, electronically, by mail, visually, orally or by written means.

This policy applies to all St. Clair Township staff, volunteers, elected officials and third parties who deal with the public, on behalf of St. Clair Township.

POLICY

The Corporation shall meet its duties and responsibilities under Ontario Regulation 429/07 by adhering to the following principles and practices:

i) Training

Training is required for those staff, elected officials, volunteers or third parties that interact with the public on behalf of the corporation, or who are involved in developing policies, practices and procedures. The required training must include information on how to communicate and interact with people with disabilities, how to interact with people who have an assistive device, service animal or support person, how to utilize assisted devices that are available on Township premises, and what to do if a person has difficulty accessing St. Clair Township services.

The training will include the core principles of customer service as set out by St. Clair Township which include: dignity, equity, inclusion, independence, integration, sensitivity and equality.

A training program of varying modules will be implemented which will ensure compliance and meet the needs of various departments and employee groups. Records are to be kept indicating the date and training provided, and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.

Third party organizations providing goods or services on behalf of the Township shall provide relevant training, learning opportunities or direction to employees and volunteers regarding their roles and responsibilities under the AODA.

ii) Service Animals and Support Persons

A person with a disability accompanied by a service animal is permitted to enter St. Clair Township premises with the animal unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law. Should a service animal be excluded from the premises then the municipality shall ensure that other measures are available to enable the persons with the disability to obtain, use or benefit from the good and/or services.

Section 4(9) of the Accessibility Standards on Customer Service indicates that an animal is a service animal if (1) it is readily apparent that the animal is being used for reasons related to a person's disability; or (2) if the person provides a letter from the doctor or nurse confirming that the animal is required for reasons relating to the disability.

Staff will be properly trained to identify support persons who may be a paid professional, volunteer, family member or friend that may accompany a customer in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods and services.

A disabled person's support person is to be permitted access to Township facilities at no charge when there is a regular fee to access the facility.

iii) Notice of Temporary Disruptions

St. Clair Township will give notice of temporary disruptions to service or facilities used by persons with disabilities including the reason(s) for the disruption. The notice shall be posted appropriately at the facility and on the Township web site when appropriate. When the disruption is planned, advanced notice will be provided.

iv) Feedback

Notices in customer service areas will notify customers that their feedback is welcomed and valued for the continual improvement of services so as to avoid inadvertently excluding people with disabilities from activities or services. An accessible simple to use system of providing feedback and complaints will be made available through a range of service channels.

Staff will make note of feedback given in person, verbally or in writing, online, by telephone, TTY or any other means. A simple to use, accessible process for customers to provide feedback or complaints will be in place.

The Accessibility Advisory Committee will consult with customer service staff regarding feedback and complaints and on improvements to customer service.

v) Emergency Situations

Staff will be familiar with emergency procedures and how to assist customers or staff who may require help during an emergency.

A designated emergency room with the required equipment will be determined with the advice of local emergency services staff and be known to fire, police and/or other relevant departments.

APPENDIX A

ACCESSIBILITY CUSTOMER SERVICE AND TRAINING PROTOCOL FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (Accessibility Standards for Customer Service)

A STATEMENT

1. In keeping with its mission of “caring, growing, innovative”, St. Clair Township is committed to providing accessible, quality services and goods to persons with disabilities in a manner that promotes dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.
2. The Township shall at all times make available its services and goods to persons with disabilities in accordance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service prescribed under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, as amended.

B POLICY

3. To this end, the Township has adopted a written policy entitled Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.
4. All employees, agents, contractors and any other person or entity, including council members, providing goods and services or goods for or on behalf of the Township (hereinafter, “Township Service Providers”) shall do so in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Policy.
5. Management and supervisory staff shall be responsible for ensuring that all services within their department(s) or service area are provided in accordance with the Policy and this Protocol.
6. The Township Clerk shall maintain a copy of the Policy in the offices of the Township Clerk and shall cause to have the Policy reviewed and revised from time to time to maintain it current with the prescribed Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.

C PUBLIC AWARENESS

7. The Township shall post a copy of the document attached hereto as Appendix “A” (being a summary of the Policy) as amended from time to time, in a conspicuous location where it will come to the attention of members of the

public at each of its facilities where Township services and/or goods are offered to members of the public and on the Township website.

D TRAINING

8. To create awareness and to ensure compliance with the Policy and the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, the Township shall ensure that all Township Service Providers receives training as soon as practicable on the Policy and the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and on an ongoing basis as changes occur to the Policy and/or to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.
9. To this end, the Township has developed written training materials (hereinafter, "Training Materials") in the form attached as Appendix "B" which set out its practices and procedures in its provision of services to persons with disabilities. The Township Clerk shall maintain a copy of the Training Materials in the offices of the Township Clerk and shall cause to have the Training Materials reviewed and revised from time to time to maintain them current with current best practices and with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.
10. All Township Service Providers shall receive training on the Policy, which shall include receiving a copy of the Training Materials and completing the test/quiz contained therein prior to the end of the calendar year 2009.
11. New Township Service Providers hired and/or otherwise retained after 2009 shall receive training on the Policy, including receiving a copy of the Training Materials, as soon as is practicable given their duties and responsibilities.
12. Without limiting the generality of paragraphs 10 and 11 above, the training contemplated herein shall include:
 - a) a review of the purpose of the Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005;
 - b) a review of the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service as prescribed under the Act;
 - c) instructions on the Township Policy and its procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities, as set out in the Training Materials;
 - d) how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;
 - e) what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing the Township's goods and 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 equipment or devices available on Township premises that may help with the provisions of goods and services to persons with disabilities.
13. The Township Clerk shall cause written training records to be maintained, indicating the date on which training was provided, the type of training and the name of attendees.

E COMMUNICATIONS AND AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS

14. All documents required under the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, including the Township's Policy, Training Materials, training records, notices, feedback records and this Protocol, shall be made available to members of the public upon written request.
15. When providing any documentation to a person with a disability, the Township shall do so in a manner and a format that takes into account the person's disability wherever practical.
16. All requests for alternative formats shall be immediately communicated in writing to the Director of the Department and to the Township Clerk. Management of the department and/or division shall be responsible for providing alternative formats, when requested, to a person with a disability wherever practical.

F FEEDBACK

17. The Township is committed to continuous improvement. To this end, anyone who wishes to provide any feedback about how to provide goods or services to a person with a disability and/or improve the Policy, Training Materials and/or this Protocol (including Appendices) may do so by contacting the Township Clerk at the addresses noted in paragraph 18 below or completing the feedback form online at www.twp.stclair.on.ca.
18. All feedback shall be acknowledged by the Township Clerk, in writing. Any action taken as a result of a feedback should be communicated to the person as soon as possible.

G QUESTIONS, COMPLIMENTS OR COMPLAINTS

19. Anyone with compliment, complaint, question or concern about the Policy, Training Materials or Protocol may contact the Township Clerk in person, in writing, by e-mail, by telephone or online (at www.twp.stclair.on.ca).

St. Clair Township
Clerk
1155 Emily Street
Mooretown, ON N0N 1M0
Ph: 519-867-2021
Fax: 519-867-5509
e-mail: jdemars@twp.stclair.on.ca

The Township will acknowledge your questions, concerns, compliments and complaints and will provide a written response, together with its findings, within fourteen (14) business days of receiving your correspondence.

**St. Clair Township
Accessibility Feedback Form**

Thank you for taking the time to share your feedback with the Township of St. Clair Clerk's Department. Your comments are important because we want to make your experience with St. Clair Township the best it can be.

Please submit this form the to St. Clair Township Clerk's Department.

St. Clair Township location visited:

Address: _____

Date of visit: _____

What services were you looking for? _____

Was our customer service provided to you in an accessible manner?

Yes Somewhat No

Comments: _____

What could the Township of St. Clair do to make it easier for you to access our goods and services?

Would you like to be contacted?

Yes No

Method of Contact:

Mail Phone E-mail

Complete your contact information below only if you need a reply.

Last Name: _____

First Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Province: _____

Postal Code: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

The Township of St. Clair is collecting the personal information you provide on this form so we can respond to your feedback. If you have questions about the collection, use and disclosure of your personal information by the Township of St. Clair, please contact the Township Clerk's Department.