



# accessible customer service

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Town of  
East Gwillimbury



TOWN OF  
WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE



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<b>Accessibility Standards for Customer Service</b>	<b>Included</b>
<b>Accessible Customer Service Slides</b>	<b>Included</b>

## Learning Outcomes

- Purpose of the Act
- Requirements of the Customer Service Standard
- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with a person with a disability who may use an assistive device or require the assistance of a support person, guide dog or other service animal
- How to use equipment or devices available on the Town's premises that help with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability
- How the AODA, Accessible Customer Service Standard impacts your job
- Review of the Corporate Policy and Guidelines

### accessibility tips

In general, as you should do with anyone, treat people with disabilities with respect and then you can't go wrong.

## Agenda

Background  
 Legislation  
 Customer Service Standard  
 Accessible Customer Service  
 Assistive Devices  
 Alternative Formats  
 Notice of Service  
 Feedback  
 Simulation  
 DVD  
 Assisting Customers  
 Summary and Closing



### Notes:

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## Background and Legislation:

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) was passed by Ontario legislature with the goal of creating standards to improve accessibility across the province.

The goal is to have a fully Accessible Ontario by 2025!

Approximately 1.85 million or 15.5 % of people in Ontario have some type of disability. In Georgina that translates to an estimated 7,300 residents that have some type of disability.

The Royal Bank has reported that persons with disabilities have spending power of \$21 billion to \$25 billion a year in Canada.

There are two acts that played a role in the development of the AODA:

### accessibility tips

Language is powerful!

Always put the person first- not the disability.

Human Rights Code	Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)	Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act 2005 (AODA)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• States we have a duty to accommodate</li> <li>• Goal of accommodation is to allow equal benefits and participation in services</li> <li>• Provide for equal rights and opportunities</li> <li>• Right to equal treatment and equal access to facilities and services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only applies to broader public sector</li> <li>• Annual Accessibility Planning Process</li> <li>• Creation of the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario</li> <li>• Accessibility Advisory Committee required for municipalities over 10,000</li> <li>• No standards and limited enforcement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop accessibility standards</li> <li>• Ensure compliance with standards through reporting and enforcement with possible fines</li> <li>• 5 Standards under the AODA               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Customer Service</li> <li>2. Transportation</li> <li>3. Information &amp; Communication</li> <li>4. Employment</li> <li>5. Built Environment</li> </ol> </li> </ul>

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## Customer Service Standard

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service have been developed and they detail specific requirements for all service providers. This standard became law on January 1, 2008 and comes into effect on January 1, 2010 for public sector organizations and January 1, 2012 for the private sector. The municipality must:

- 1) Establish policies, procedures and practices on providing goods or services to people with disabilities.
- 2) Communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability.
- 3) Set a policy for people with disabilities to use their own personal assistive devices to access our goods and use our services.
- 4) Acknowledge that people with disabilities can be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal in those areas of our premises that are open to the public.
- 5) Acknowledge that people with disabilities who use a support person can bring that person with them while accessing our goods or services in premises open to the public.
- 6) Ensure training of staff, volunteers, contractors and any other person who interacts with the public on our behalf on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard.
- 7) Establish a process for people with disabilities to provide feedback on how we provide goods or services to people with disabilities and how we will respond to any feedback and take action on any complaints.
- 8) Provide notice when facilities or service that people with disabilities rely on to access or use our goods or services are temporarily disrupted.

### accessibility tips

When you wish to help a person who has a disability, ask them if they need help and then ask how you can help.

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## What is Accessible Customer Service?

The municipality is committed to providing customer service to persons with a disability in a manner that:

- respects their **dignity** and **independence**;
- the provision of goods and services is **integrated** as fully as practicable unless an alternate measure is necessary;
- ensures an **equal opportunity** is given to a person with a disability that is given to other customers who obtain and use our goods and services ; and
- provides a person with a disability to benefit from the same service, in the same place, and in a similar way to other customers.

### accessibility tips

Take time to listen to a person with a disability. Listening includes paying attention to facial expressions, gestures and body language.

For example: a person who is blind may need to have information read aloud to them; an individual with a learning disability may need to have instructions written down; and someone who has a physical impairment may need you to assist them when completing a form.

Accessible customer service is **good** customer service – courteous, helpful and prompt.

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## Disability:

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 uses the same definition of “disability” as the Human Rights Code.

A “disability” is:

- a) any degree of physical disability, 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 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 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; 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

### accessibility tips

Be considerate of the extra time it might take for a person with a disability to do or say something.

## General categories of disabilities include, but are not limited to:

- Vision
- Physical
- Developmental
- Mental Health
- Deafblind
- Temporary Disabilities
- Hearing
- Intellectual
- Learning
- Speech or Language
- Other Conditions: cancer, asthma

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## Communicating:

When communicating with a person with a disability, recognize your nervousness and relax! A person with a disability is aware that they have a disability and are generally aware that they may need some accommodations and will work with you. Just remember to ask how you can help.

### accessibility tips

If a person lip-reads, face him or her directly, speak clearly and with a moderate pace.

**Please note: See pages 21-26 for additional information and tips to help you provide service to your customers.**

## Communication Tips:

- Put the person first
- Ask “How may I help you?”
- Speak directly to the customer using a normal tone of voice
- Don’t make assumptions, always ask
- Focus on meeting your customer’s needs
- All customers have a range of needs and preference and so do your customers with disabilities
- If you can’t understand, politely ask your customer to repeat it
- Ask if the information you are conveying needs to be repeated. “Is there anything you would like me to repeat?”
- Exercise patience
- Recognize your nervousness and relax
- Don’t be afraid to ask questions when you are unsure of what to do

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## Barriers to Providing Accessible Customer Service:

When thinking about accessibility, it is important to be aware of both visible and invisible barriers. A barrier is anything that keeps someone with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society.

**Physical Barriers** - exist in a structural environment that interferes with or impedes a person with a physical disability from accessing a particular location or service.

- No ramp to enter a building
- Room layout

**Communication Barriers** – exist when an individual is unable to access information in a format they can use. Alternative forms of communication include such things as audiocassettes, Braille, large print, closed captioned video and computer diskettes.

- Document only available in one format
- Websites that don't support screen-reading software

**Systemic Barriers** – occur when practices or policies are put in place that discriminate against individuals by screening them out from participation.

- Recruitment Policies
- Minor Sports

**Attitudinal Barriers** – are inaccurate beliefs or perceptions about a person's ability based on assumptions and a lack of direct knowledge. This type of barrier impacts accessibility on all levels since most of the other barriers are rooted in attitudes as well. These can be the hardest to address in spite of the fact that they are the ones we have the most control over.

- Assuming someone with a speech problem has intellectual limitation and speaking to them in a manner that would be used with a child

### accessibility tips

Not all parking lots are well designed. Keep an eye open for curb cuts and avoid blocking access. It may be the only entrance for someone using a mobility aid.



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## Assistive Devices, Service Animals and Support Persons

It is important to take some time to understand what an assistive device is. What is a service animal and who is deemed a support person?

It is also important to understand how to interact with a person with a disability who may use an assistive device, or rely on a service animal or a support person.

### accessibility tips

Do not push, lean on or hold onto a person's wheelchair or other mobility aid unless the person asks you to.

### Assistive Devices:

- An assistive device is an item a person may bring with them or that is already on the premises and is used to assist a person with a disability in accessing goods and/or services or participating in a program provided by the Town of Georgina.
- Assistive devices include, but are not limited to, wheelchairs, walkers, white canes used by people who are blind or who have low vision, note-taking devices, portable magnifiers, recording machines, assistive listening devices, personal oxygen tanks and devices for grasping.

### Assistive devices available at the Town of Georgina include:

- Automatic door openers at town facilities
- Elevators
- Listening device available in the Council Chambers
- Water wheelchair available at the Georgina Leisure Pool

### Notes:


## How to interact with a person with a disability who may use an assistive device:

- Do not lean on or reach over them.
- Ensure the person is permitted to enter the premises with the device and to utilize the device.
- Potential barriers to the use of assistive devices must be removed where possible.
- Ensure persons with disabilities are aware of assistive devices available on the provider's premises or otherwise supplied by the provider.
- Assistive devices must be offered in a manner that respects the person's dignity and independence.

### accessibility tips

Place a vision impaired/blind person's hand on the back of the chair to assist with seating of him/her.



### Notes:

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## What is a service animal?

- As indicated in our policy and the regulation “an animal is a service animal if:
  - a) it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
  - b) the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.
- An animal which is specially trained to assist an individual with disabilities.

### accessibility tips

A person with a disability may be accompanied by their service animal, even in places where animals are normally not permitted

## How to interact with a person with a disability who uses a service animal:

- Do not pet the service animal
- Do not feed the service animal
- Do not call out to or distract the service animal, they are on duty
- Never grab the harness or leash from the handler
- Speak to the person, not the service animal
- The person with the service animal is responsible for the care and control of the animal while they are on our premises



### Notes:

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## Who is a support person?

- In relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.
- A support person may be a paid worker, a volunteer, a friend or family member.
- The support person does not need to have special training or qualifications.

### accessibility tips

Take time to listen to a person with a disability.

Listening includes paying attention to facial expressions, gestures and body language.

## • How to interact with a person with a disability who may bring a support person with them:

- Both persons are permitted to enter the premises together.
- The person with a disability is allowed to have access to the support person while on the premises.
- Consent is required if confidential information is going to be shared while a support person is present.
- Speak directly to your customer, not the Support Person.

### Notes:

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## Providing information in Alternative Formats:

People with disabilities use methods other than standard print to access information. These methods are often referred to as alternative formats. Some people with disabilities may be able to use documents in a variety of formats while other individuals, depending on their disability and circumstances, may have only one option.

The standard requires that municipalities take a person's disability into account when meeting the person's request for documents. Consider discussing an appropriate alternative format with the customer. For example, if the customer asks for large print, be clear about what "large print" means to them.

### accessibility tips

Not all disabilities are obvious; some are "invisible". For instance, you may not know that a person is deaf or deafened until you try to talk to them.

## Types of Alternative Formats:

- Large Print
- Electronic
- Braille
- Sign Language
- Closed Caption
- Audio
- Read information aloud
- Write down instructions
- Draw a diagram

### Notes:

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## Notice of Service Disruption

It is possible that from time to time there will be disruptions in service, such as an entrance way that is under repair, renovations that limit access to an area or technology that is temporarily unavailable.

The Town is required to provide notice of disruptions regardless of whether the disruption is planned or not.

### accessibility tips

If holding a lengthy conversation with someone using a wheelchair, grab a chair, squat down or back away a few feet to allow for eye to eye contact.

### The Notice must include the following information:

- The reason for and information about the disruption
- Anticipated duration
- Description of alternative facilities or services, if available
- Contact information

*Sample forms can be found in the resources section.*

When a disruption is known in advance or planned, **a Notice of Disruption of Service will be posted two weeks prior to a service disruption** whenever possible. Unexpected disruptions in service shall be posted as soon as possible.

Notices may be given by posting the information in a conspicuous place on the premises, on the Town's website or any other such method as is reasonable in the circumstances, for example:

- On the municipalities owned, leased or operated buildings or property, on the front doors
- In the local newspaper
- After hours service line
- LED Display Boards where appropriate
- Voicemail where appropriate
- Or by other method as appropriate

### Notes:

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## Feedback

The legislation requires that there is a process for receiving and responding to feedback about how the town provides goods and/or services to a person with a disability.

The feedback process allows people to provide feedback in person, by telephone, in writing, by e-mail, online, on disk or by other method. Feedback will also be received on the comment cards provided within each Commission.

All feedback received on the comment cards will go to the appropriate Department (Director).

Feedback relating to the accessibility of goods and/or services will be forwarded to the Town Clerk for follow up with the appropriate department and the customer. Response to a complaint regarding the accessibility of goods and/or services will be responded to by the Town Clerk within 14 business days.

If a customer requires assistance to complete the feedback form due to their disability, offer to assist them in completing their form. Review what you have written with the customer to ensure you have recorded their feedback correctly.

### accessibility tips

Be courteous and leave the accessible stall in public washrooms free for those who need to use them.

The Town of Georgina is committed to providing Accessible Customer Service to people of all abilities while ensuring we respect the dignity and independence of each person.

1) Was the service you received today provided to you in an accessible manner? If no, please explain.

2) Did you have any problems accessing goods or services at The Town of Georgina? If yes, please explain.

### Notes:

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## Talk To Me - DVD

**T** – Take the time to ask, “May I help you?”

**A** – Ask; don’t assume. Never assist unless asked.

**L** – Listen attentively and speak directly to the customer.

**K** – Know the accommodations and special services available.

### accessibility tips

Don’t be afraid to say “see” to a person who is blind or “hear” to a person who is deaf. These words are part of our language.



### Notes:

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## What can I do to help my customer access goods or services?

All customers have their own specific needs or preferences. Being positive, flexible and open to suggestions will help to create a good customer experience. A good starting point is to ask your customer how you can help them access your goods or services.

Often, good customer service for people with disabilities can be achieved through simple and effective solutions to challenges. For example:

- Your customer is Deaf and does not have a sign language interpreter with them. Ask them, in writing, if using a pen and paper to communicate would be a good way to assist them.
- The program guide where you work cannot be read by your customer who has low vision. Offer to read it aloud to the customer.
- If the building does not have automatic door openers, be prepared to open the door.

Take the time to understand the needs of each customer.

**Remember, your customers are your best source for information about their needs. Ask them what you can do to help them. They will likely appreciate your attention and consideration for their needs.**

### accessibility tips

When talking with a person who is deaf or uses a hearing aid, talk directly to the person, keeping eye contact.



### Notes:

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# resources







## **Tips on Providing Service to Customers with Disabilities**

- If you're not sure what to do, ask your customer, "May I help you?" Your customers with disabilities know if they need help and how you can provide it.
- Speak directly to the person with a disability, not to his or her support person.
- Avoid stereotypes and make no assumptions about what type of disability or disabilities a person may have. Some disabilities are not visible and customers are not required to give you information about any disabilities they may have.
- Take the time to get to know your customer's needs and focus on meeting those needs just as you would with any other customer.
- Be patient. People with some kinds of disabilities may take a little longer to understand and respond. A good start is to listen carefully.



Each table below defines a specific category of disability and outlines some communication tips to help provide service to customers.

**Vision Disabilities:**

Definition:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A vision disability reduces a person's ability to see clearly.</li><li>• It may restrict a person's ability to read signs, locate landmarks or see hazards.</li><li>• Most individuals who are legally blind have some remaining vision – very few are totally blind.</li><li>• May use a guide dog or white cane.</li><li>• May need to view written documents in large print, or with help of a magnifier.</li></ul>
Tips for Serving Customer:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't assume your customer can't see you.</li><li>• Speak normally and directly to customer.</li><li>• Offer your elbow to guide.</li><li>• If they accept, walk slowly, wait for permission.</li><li>• Identify landmarks.</li><li>• Be precise and descriptive with information.</li><li>• Don't walk away without saying goodbye</li><li>• Be patient, interactions may take longer.</li></ul>
Types of assistance your customer might use:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Braille</li><li>• Large print</li><li>• Magnification devices</li><li>• White cane</li><li>• Guide dog</li><li>• Support person</li></ul>



## **Hearing Disabilities:**

### **Definition:**

- A person with hearing loss may be deaf or hard of hearing.
- Like other disabilities, hearing loss has a wide variety of degrees.
- A person with a hearing impairment may require assistive device when communicating.

### **Tips for Serving Customer:**

- Attract the customer's attention before speaking – gentle touch on the shoulder or wave of your hand.
- Look at and speak directly to the person.
- May have to use pen and paper to communicate.
- Speak clearly; keep hands away from your face.
- Reduce background noise.

### **Types of assistance your customer might use:**

- Hearing aid
- Pen and paper
- Personal amplification device (e.g. Pocket Talker)
- Phone amplifier
- Relay Service
- Teletypewriter (TTY)
- Hearing alert dog
- Support Person such as a sign language interpreter

## **Physical Disabilities or Disabilities Affecting Mobility:**

### **Definition:**

- May restrict a person in the following ways:
  - Control or speed of movements
  - Coordination and balance
  - Ability to grasp some objects
  - Ability to walk long distances
  - Ability to sit or stand for prolonged periods
- Can be present at birth, result from disease, injury or be temporary

### **Tips for Serving Customer:**

- Speak directly to the person.
- Ask before you help.
- Don't touch assistive devices, including wheelchairs unnecessarily unless it is an emergency.
- Don't leave the person in an awkward, dangerous or undignified position.

### **Types of assistance your customer might use:**

- Elevator
- Mobility device (e.g. wheelchair, scooter, walker, cane, crutches)
- Support person



### **Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities:**

<b>Definition:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intellectual development and capacity that is below average.</li> <li>• Can mildly or profoundly limit ability to learn, communicate, do everyday activities and live independently.</li> <li>• May be an invisible disability.</li> <li>• They may understand you more than you know.</li> </ul>
<b>Tips for Serving Customer:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't assume what a person can or cannot do.</li> <li>• Use plain language.</li> <li>• Take your time, be patient.</li> <li>• Ask: "Do you understand this?"</li> <li>• Provide one piece of information at a time.</li> <li>• If you can't understand what is being said, don't pretend. Just ask again.</li> </ul>
<b>Types of assistance your customer might use:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication board</li> <li>• Speech generating device</li> <li>• Service animal</li> <li>• Support person</li> </ul>

### **Learning Disabilities:**

<b>Definition:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May affect how a person receives, expresses or processes information.</li> <li>• In many cases individual has average or above average intelligence.</li> <li>• May affect language based learning, mathematics, and/or writing, fine motor skills.</li> </ul>
<b>Tips for Serving Customer:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take your time, be patient it may take a little more time for the person to understand and respond.</li> <li>• Provide information in a way that works for your customer (i.e. pen and paper).</li> <li>• Speak normally, clearly and directly to your customer.</li> <li>• Be prepared to explain the information you provide.</li> </ul>
<b>Types of assistance your customer might use:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative technology for writing</li> <li>• Calculator</li> <li>• Scanning or reading technology</li> <li>• Tape recorders, mini pocket recorders</li> </ul>

### **Mental Health Disabilities:**

<b>Definition:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental health disabilities include a range of disorders however there are three main types of mental health disabilities – anxiety, mood, behavioural.</li> <li>• A person with a mental health disability can look like anyone else; you may not know that a person has a mental health disability unless you are informed of it.</li> </ul>
<b>Tips for Serving Customer:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treat the customer with the same level of respect and consideration.</li> <li>• Be confident and reassuring.</li> <li>• If the customer is in crisis, ask how best to help.</li> <li>• Take the customer seriously.</li> <li>• Don't take things personally.</li> </ul>
<b>Types of assistance your customer might use:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service animal</li> <li>• Support person</li> </ul>

### **Speech or Language Disabilities:**

<b>Definition:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May have problems communicating.</li> <li>• May be difficult to pronounce words, slurring or stuttering.</li> <li>• May use communication boards or other assistive devices.</li> </ul>
<b>Tips for Serving Customer:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't make assumptions.</li> <li>• Give whatever time they need to get their point across.</li> <li>• Ask questions that can be answered 'yes' or 'no', if possible.</li> <li>• Don't interrupt or finish your customer's sentences.</li> <li>• Say: "I don't understand, can you please repeat that?"</li> </ul>
<b>Types of assistance your customer might use:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication board</li> <li>• Paper and pen</li> <li>• Speech generating device</li> <li>• Support person</li> </ul>

### **Deafblind Disability:**

<b>Definition:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cannot see or hear to some extent. This results in greater difficulties in accessing information and managing daily activities.</li> <li>• Many will be accompanied by an intervenor, a professional who helps with communicating.</li> </ul>
<b>Tips for Serving Customer:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speak directly to your customer, not to the intervenor.</li> <li>• Identify yourself to the intervenor.</li> <li>• A customer who is deafblind may have a card or note explaining how to communicate with them.</li> </ul>
<b>Types of assistance your customer might use:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Braille</li> <li>• Large print</li> <li>• Print on paper</li> <li>• Communication boards</li> <li>• Hearing aid with built-in FM system</li> <li>• Magnification equipment such as monocular or magnifier</li> <li>• Teletypewriter (TTY)</li> <li>• White cane</li> <li>• Service animal</li> <li>• Support person, such as an intervenor</li> </ul>

*Information from the Ministry of Community and Social Services website:*  
[http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/english/topics/pop\\_adu\\_needs.htm](http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/english/topics/pop_adu_needs.htm)



## Talking About Disabilities – Choose the Right Word

Words can influence and reinforce the public's perception of people with disabilities. They can create either a positive view of people with disabilities or an indifferent, negative depiction.

Here are some general tips that can help make your communication and interactions with or about people with all types of disabilities more successful.

- Use *disability* or *disabled*, not *handicap* or *handicapped*.
- Never use terms such as *retarded*, *dumb*, *psycho*, *moron* or *crippled*. These words are very demeaning and disrespectful to people with disabilities.
- Remember to put people first. It is proper to say *person with a disability*, rather than *disabled person*.
- **If you don't know someone or if you are not familiar with their disability, it's better to wait until the individual describes his/her situation to you, rather than to make your own assumptions. Many types of disabilities have similar characteristics and your assumptions may be wrong.**

The following preferred words and phrases will help you choose language that is neither demeaning nor hurtful. People with disabilities prefer these terms.

Instead of	Please use
Afflicted by cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, arthritis, etc.	Person who has cerebral palsy. Person who has multiple sclerosis. Person who has arthritis, etc. Person with a disability.
Aged (the)	Seniors.
Autistic	A person with autism. A person who has autism.
Birth defect, congenital defect, deformity	A person who has a congenital disability. A person with a disability since birth.
Blind (the), visually impaired (the)	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.
Brain damaged	A person with a brain injury. A person with a head injury.
Confined to a wheelchair, wheelchair bound	A person who uses a wheelchair.

Crazy, insane, lunatic, psycho, mental, mental patient, maniac, neurotic, psychotic, unsound mind, schizophrenic	A person with a mental health disability. A person who has depression. A person with schizophrenia.
Cripple, crippled, lame	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.
Deaf (the), hearing impaired (the)	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."
Deaf and dumb, deaf mute	A person who is deaf without speech.
Deaf-Blind (the)	Person who is deaf-blind (person who has any combination of visual and auditory impairments.)
Differently Abled	A person with a disability.
Disabled (the)	People with disabilities.
Elderly (the)	Seniors, older adults.
Epileptic	Person who has epilepsy.
Fits, spells, attacks	Seizures.

Handicapped (the)	<p>Person with a disability.</p> <p>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."</p>
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. A person with a developmental disability.
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 what ever their specific diagnosis is", a form of dwarfism.
Mongoloid, Mongolism	<p>Person with Down Syndrome. One can use this terminology only when it is directly relevant.</p> <p>A person with an intellectual or developmental disability.</p>
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 and 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.

## Service Animals

The following chart lists some types of service animals, key tasks they perform and those who use service animals.

Service Animal	Key Tasks	Users
Autism assistance or service dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keeps a child from running into danger and provides assistance when sensory stimulus is heightened. Dog can be attached to the child's waist by a belt and a leash held by an adult</li> </ul>	People with autism or other developmental/intellectual disabilities
Guide dog, dog guide or seeing eye dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follows directions of owner, alerts owner to changes in elevation (e.g. curbs, stairs) and obstacles</li> </ul>	People with vision loss
Hearing ear, hearing, sound alert or hearing alert dog, cat or animal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alerts owner to sounds often by a nudge or pawing and leads him/her to the source of the sound</li> <li>May use a special signal to alert owner to fire alarm</li> </ul>	People who are Deaf, deafened or hard of hearing
Psychiatric service dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retrieves and prompts the person to take medicine, retrieves or activates medical alert, leads person out of crowds, etc.</li> </ul>	People with mental health disabilities

Service Animal	Key Tasks	Users
Service or mobility dog or animal, special skills dog or animal  (Small ponies or miniature horses are used but are not as common)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May pull wheelchair, carry objects, pull items, and turn handles or push buttons such as door openers. Larger dogs may provide balance support</li> </ul>	People with physical disabilities
Seizure alert, seizure assist or seizure response dog or animal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steers owner from danger during a seizure, activates medical alert</li> <li>Can alert owner to an oncoming seizure</li> </ul>	People who have epilepsy or other seizure disorders

*Information taken from the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07, Training Resource*

[http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/mcss/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario/accesson/compliance/customer/comp\\_training.htm](http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/mcss/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario/accesson/compliance/customer/comp_training.htm)

## Support Person

The following chart lists some examples of functions performed by support persons:

Person with a Disability	Support Person's Functions
Person who is deafblind	To guide, to provide transportation and adaptive communication such as tactile or adapted American Sign Language, large print notes, print on palm or two-handed manual signing
Person who is Deaf, deafened	To provide sign language or oral interpretation services – to translate conversation, not to participate in it
Person with a learning disability	To help with complex communication or note-taking
Person with an intellectual/developmental disability	To help with travel, daily activities, prompting medication, complex tasks, or to keep them from dangerous situations
Person with a mental health disability	To help with communication tasks such as completing complex forms  To help in environments such as crowded, noisy settings or high stress situations such as interviews
Person with a physical disability	To provide services related to traveling, personal care such as toileting or eating, monitoring medical conditions
Person with a seizure disorder	To assist in the event of a seizure, e.g. to provide the individual form falls
Person with a speech impairment who uses an augmentative or alternative communication system (symbol board, electronic communication system)	To rely or interpret a person's communications
Person with vision loss	To read or to guide

*Information taken from the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07, Training Resource*

[http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/mcsc/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario/accesson/compliance/customer/comp\\_training.htm](http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/mcsc/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario/accesson/compliance/customer/comp_training.htm)



## Website Resources:

Access ON – provides information on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) including all 5 standards. The site has hints, tips and stories from individuals within Ontario that have a disability.

[www.accesson.ca](http://www.accesson.ca)

Ministry of Community and Social Services – provides information about the ministry and information on the AODA, including statistics, standard information and compliance.

[www.mcscs.gov.on.ca](http://www.mcscs.gov.on.ca)

Canadian National Institute for the Blind- CNIB – provides facts, information, resources, Clear Print Standards and more regarding vision loss.

[www.cnib.ca](http://www.cnib.ca)

Canadian Hearing Society – provides information about hearing loss as well as services and programs offered through the society.

[www.chs.ca](http://www.chs.ca)

Canadian Mental Health Association – CMHA – provides information on understanding mental health, articles, support centres and more.

[www.cmha.ca](http://www.cmha.ca)

Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind – provides information about guide dogs, programs and other information related to guide dogs.

[www.guidedogs.ca](http://www.guidedogs.ca)

St. John Ambulance – provides information on therapy dog services, how to get involved and more.

[www.sja.ca](http://www.sja.ca)



## How to use a TTY and the Telephone Relay Service

TTY (Teletypewriter) is a device that allows users to send typed messages across phone lines. Many people who are Deaf, deafened, hard of hearing, or who are deafblind may use TTYs to call other individuals.

This device generally has a keyboard and display that lets the user send and receive typed messages over telephone lines. People who are deafblind may use an additional large print or Braille display to read the typed messages.

A stand-alone TTY must communicate with another TTY. TTY users can directly call other TTY numbers or they can call a Relay Service. The Relay Service operator will receive the messages on a TTY and relay the messages, by standard phone, to a person who does not have a TTY. A standard phone user can also place a call through the Relay Service operator to a TTY user.

If your business or organization has a TTY, learn how to operate the device.

To make a TTY call:

1. Push the "ON" switch.
2. Push the DISPLAY switch if you wish to use the screen alone, or the PRINT switch if you want what is typed both on screen and in print.
3. Place the telephone receiver on the TTY's rubber receptacles. Make sure that the receiver is firmly in place and that the telephone's receiver cord is on the LEFT side of the TTY.
4. Check the telephone indicator light; if it is lit, you have the line.
5. Dial the number, and watch the telephone light; if it is flashing slowly, this indicates that the device on the other end is ringing.
6. When the person you are calling answers, you will see a phrase appear on the screen such as: "Hello, this is Richard GA." The "GA" stands for Go Ahead -- Don't forget to use "GA" whenever you have finished what you are saying, so that the other person will know it is his/her turn.
7. When you wish the call to end and you wish to advise the other person, type GA or SK ("Stop keying"). The person will respond by "SK" if he/she agrees. Be courteous - wait until the other person indicates "SK" before hanging up.

### Note:

- The person who receives the call is always the one who starts typing first.
- Always switch the TTY "OFF" as soon as you have finished the call.

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Resources Section of the e-course: Serve-Ability: Transforming Ontario's Customer Service, Accessibility Directorate of Ontario, Ministry of Community and Social Services



## How to communicate using the Relay Service

1. Phone the Relay Service number (1-800-855-0511).
2. Tell the operator your name, the name of the person you are calling, and the number you wish to reach.
3. The operator will make the call for you. You 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."
4. Remember to say "Go Ahead" when you finish speaking, so the person on the other end will know it is their turn to speak.
5. If you normally speak very quickly, the operator may ask you to speak more slowly so your message can be typed while you are speaking. There will be brief silences as the operator types to the TTY user and the user replies.

You can find out more about this service at: [www.bell.ca/specialneeds/](http://www.bell.ca/specialneeds/)





## HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES, GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

<b>SUBJECT:</b> Corporate Accessibility Standards - Accessibility Standards for Customer Service		Policy No. 50 Effective Date: January 1, 2010
Revision No:	Date:	Approved by: Council July 13, 2009

### **Policy Statement**

Through the establishment of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service policy and supporting procedures and practices that respect the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities, the Town of Georgina is reflecting its commitment to sound governance, accountability and focus on service excellence in fulfilling its mission to always strive to meet or exceed expectations.

### **Purpose**

The Town of Georgina is committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access Town goods and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other customers. To ensure support for and compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and relevant regulations, the Town of Georgina will make reasonable efforts to ensure that it provides accessible customer service to people with various kinds of disabilities and respects the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity, as defined herein.

### **Definitions**

*Taken from the Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*

**Assistive Device** – shall mean an auxiliary aid such as communication aid, cognition aid, personal mobility aid and medical aid (i.e. canes, crutches, wheelchairs, or hearing aids etc.) to access and benefit from the goods and services offered by the Town of Georgina.

**Barrier** - means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of the disability. Barriers may include a physical, architectural and attitudinal barrier as well as, an information or communication barrier, technological barriers, a policy, procedure or a practice.

**Disability** - means any degree of physical disability including, but not limited to, diabetes, epilepsy, brain injury, paralysis, amputation, lack of coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, physical reliance on a guide dog, other animal, wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device; mental impairment or developmental disability; learning disability or dysfunction in understanding or using symbols or spoken language; mental disorder; or injury for which benefits were claimed or received under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

**Guide Dog or Service Animal** - a “guide dog” means a guide dog as defined in section 1 of the *Blind Persons’ Rights Act*.

For the purpose of this policy, an animal is a service animal of a person with a disability if:

- a) it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability: or
- b) the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

**Support Person** – means in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services. A support person may be a paid support worker, a volunteer, a friend or a family member; the support person does not need to have special training or qualifications.

## **Principles**

**Dignity** – service is provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to maintain self respect and the respect of other people.

**Equal Opportunity** – service is provided to a person with a disability in such a way that they have an opportunity to access Town goods or services equal to that given to others.

**Independence** – when a person with a disability has the freedom to do things on their own without unnecessary help or interference from others.

**Integration** – service is provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in the same or similar way as other customers, unless an alternate measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability to access goods or services.

## **Policy Provisions**

### **Accessible Customer Service:**

The Town of Georgina shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, procedures and practices as amended from time to time are consistent with the following principles by establishing a set of Guidelines in support of this policy.

- a) The goods or services shall be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- b) The provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities and others shall 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.
- c) Persons with a disability shall be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods or services.

### **Assistive Devices:**

The Town of Georgina permits a person with a disability to use and keep with them their own personal assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services offered by the Town of Georgina.

Where Town-owned assistive devices are available, appropriate staff within the applicable department will be knowledgeable of the presence and trained in the use of the assistive devices. Staff will be available to assist with the Town owned assistive devices if requested for use by an individual.

### **Communication:**

Town of Georgina employees, when communicating with a person with a disability, shall do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

### **Service Animals and Support Persons:**

The Town of Georgina shall allow a person with disability, who requires to be accompanied by a support person into all Town premises that are owned or operated public facilities. Both persons are permitted to enter the premises together and the person with a disability will have access to their support person.

A support person, when assisting a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Town's goods and/or services, will be permitted to attend at no charge where an admission fee is applicable.

### **Service Animals and Support Persons (continued):**

The Town of Georgina allows a person with a disability to be accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal onto all Town of Georgina owned and operated public facilities and will ensure that the person is permitted to keep the animal with him or her unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law.

If the service animal is excluded by law from the facility, the Town of Georgina will ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Town of Georgina's goods and services.

### **Notice of Temporary Disruption:**

Notice of Service Disruption shall be provided when facilities or services that people with disabilities usually use to access Town of Georgina goods or services are temporarily unavailable or if the goods or service are expected in the near future to be temporarily unavailable, in whole or in part.

The Notice must include the following information:

- a) The reason for and information about the disruption
- b) Anticipated duration
- c) Description of alternative facilities or services, if available
- d) Contact information

Notice may be given by posting information in a conspicuous place on the premises, on the Town's website or any other such method as is reasonable in the circumstances.

### **Training:**

The Town of Georgina shall ensure the following persons will or have received training regarding the provision of its goods and services to persons with disabilities.

- 1) Every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Town, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise.
- 2) Every person who participates in developing the Town's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to members of the public or other third parties.



The training shall include but is not limited to the following:

- 1) Review of the purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Ontario Regulation 429/07;
- 2) Instruction on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
- 3) Instruction on how to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a guide dog, other service animal or support person;
- 4) Instruction on how to use equipment or devices available at Town premises or that are otherwise provided by the Town, that may help persons with disabilities access Town services, such as TTY telephones, elevators, lifts, accessible interactive kiosks, listening devices or other technology; and
- 5) Instruction on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing the Town of Georgina's services.

Training shall be provided to each person as soon as practicable and training records shall be maintained to ensure compliance with the legislation.

#### **Feedback:**

The Town of Georgina shall establish a process for receiving and responding to feedback regarding the manner in which the Town provides goods or services to persons with disabilities and shall make information about the process readily available to the public.

The feedback process shall permit persons to provide feedback in person, by telephone, in writing, by email, online, on disk or by other method.

#### **Notice of Availability of and Format of Documents:**

The Town shall provide notice that upon request it will provide a copy of the following policies, procedures and practices required under Ontario Regulation 429/07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service to any person.

- Town policies, procedures and practices on the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities – including a policy on the use of personal assistive devices by persons with disabilities to access Town goods or services.
- Service animals and support persons – Policy, procedures and practices with respect to the entry of service animals and support persons to those areas of the premises that are owned or operated by the Town, where such are open to the public.

- Notice of temporary disruption – the steps that will be taken in connection with a temporary planned or unexpected disruption to facilities or services that persons with disabilities usually use to access Town goods or services.
- Training – description of the Town policy on providing training on accessible customer service.
- Feedback process – description of the process for receiving and responding to feedback on the manner in which the Town provides goods or services to people with disabilities.

### **Format of Documents:**

Should the Town be requested to provide a person with a disability any document noted in this section, the Town will give the person the information contained in the document, in a format that takes into account the person's disability.

If a person with a disability asks for a document in a different format, staff will discuss what options are available to the individual and then agree upon the format the Town will provide.

### **Exclusions**

This Policy shall not apply during any period where an emergency has been declared by the head of Council.

### **Cross-References:**

**Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07**

**Compliance Manual: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07**

**AccessOn:** [www.accesson.ca](http://www.accesson.ca)

**Town of Georgina - Procedures to Accessible Customer Service Policy**

**Town of Georgina Accessibility Plan**



# NOTICE

## Disruption in Service

There is currently an unexpected service disruption. The estimated time of the service disruption will be:

From: \_\_\_\_\_  
To: \_\_\_\_\_

The disruption includes:

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The following alternative services are available:

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

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ (department contact)

This notice has been communicated in the following manner:

- ☐ Web Site   ☐ Posted(Locations - \_\_\_\_\_)   ☐ Newspaper/Radio  
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_



# NOTICE

## Disruption in Service

**Dear Customer:**

The **Georgina Leisure Pool** will be closed to the public from **July 15, 2009 to July 23, 2009** for routine maintenance. We pride ourselves in providing excellent customer service at our Leisure pool and regret any inconvenience this may cause.

Regular swim programs will commence on July 24, 2009. We look forward to your continued participation in our programs.

**Thank you**

**Management**

This notice has been communicated in the following manner:

- ☐ Web Site   ☐ Posted(Locations - \_\_\_\_\_)   ☐ Newspaper/Radio  
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_



## CUSTOMER FEEDBACK FORM

The Town of Georgina is committed to sound governance, accountability and service excellence as we strive to meet or exceed expectations. We value our customers and would appreciate your feedback on the goods or services you recently received from the Town of Georgina.

Date and time of your recent visit/contact: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you contact us?    ☐ In-person    ☐ Telephone    ☐ Website  
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Did we respond to your customer service needs?    ☐ Yes    ☐ No  
 Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Was our customer service provided to you in an accessible manner?  
☐ Yes    ☐ Somewhat    ☐ No  
 Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Did you encounter any problems in accessing our goods and services?  
☐ No    ☐ Somewhat    ☐ Yes  
 Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

May we contact you to obtain additional information?    ☐ Yes    ☐ No  
 Contact information: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**We appreciate your feedback. Thank-you!**

<b>FOR OFFICE USE ONLY</b>	
Received by:	
Department:	Division:
Forwarded to Roland Chenier, Clerk	Date:
Method of Feedback	
<input type="checkbox"/> In Person <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Other method _____	



# Procedures to Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

## **Policy Statement**

Through the establishment of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service policy and supporting procedures and practices that respect the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities, the Town of Georgina is reflecting its commitment to sound governance, accountability and focus on service excellence in fulfilling its mission to always strive to meet or exceed expectations.

## **Purpose**

The Town of Georgina is committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access Town goods and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other customers. To ensure support for and compliance with the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and relevant regulations, the Town of Georgina will make reasonable efforts to ensure that it provides accessible customer service to people with various kinds of disabilities and respects the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity, as defined herein.

## **Procedures:**

### **Accessible Customer Service**

The Town of Georgina shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, procedures and practices as amended from time to time are consistent with the following principles:

- a) The goods or services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- b) The provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities and others must 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.
- c) Persons with disabilities must be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods or services.

### **Assistive Devices**

The Town of Georgina permits persons with disabilities to use and keep with them their own personal assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services offered by the Town of Georgina.



Where Town-owned assistive devices are available, appropriate staff within the applicable department will be knowledgeable of the presence and trained in the use of the assistive devices. Staff will be available to assist with the Town owned assistive devices if requested for use by an individual.

Each department will maintain a list of assistive devices available within the department and will review it from time to time.

A person with a disability may use an assistive device such as, but not limited to, wheelchairs, walkers, white canes used by people who are blind or who have low vision, note taking devices, portable magnifiers, recording machines, assistive listening devices, personal oxygen tanks and devices for grasping.

When interacting with a person with a disability who may use one or more assistive device:

- Ensure that the person is permitted to enter the premises with the device and to use the device to access goods or services.
- Ensure that persons with disabilities are aware of assistive devices available on the Town of Georgina premises.
- Offer an assistive device in a manner that respects the person's dignity and independence.
- Do not lean or reach over an assistive device.
- Remove potential barriers to the use of assistive devices where possible.

## **Communication**

Town of Georgina employees, when communicating with a person with a disability shall do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability

Should the Town of Georgina be requested to provide a person with a disability a public document or information, the Town of Georgina will take into consideration the communication needs of the person with a disability and provide the information to the person with a disability in a format that is agreed upon.

In-house printed material and publications produced on behalf of the Corporation of the Town of Georgina should contain a note indicating "alternative formats are available upon request" and include the relevant contact information.

In-house printing and publications produced on behalf of the Corporation of the Town of Georgina, where possible, should adhere to the CNIB's Clear Print Standards.

If one form or method of communication cannot be used by a person with a disability, he/she may be able to use another form or method, or a combination.

When communicating with a person with a disability ensure you confirm with him/her to ensure they understand the information being presented. Ask: Do you understand? Do you have any questions?

Each table below defines a specific category of disability and outlines some communication tips to help provide service to customers.

### **Vision Disabilities:**

Definition:	Tips For Serving Customers:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A vision disability reduces a person's ability to see clearly.</li><li>• It may restrict a person's ability to read signs, locate landmarks or see hazards.</li><li>• Most individuals who are legally blind have some remaining vision – very few are totally blind.</li><li>• May use a guide dog or white cane.</li><li>• May need to view written documents in large print, or with help of a magnifier.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't assume your customer can't see you.</li><li>• Speak normally and directly to customer.</li><li>• Offer your elbow to guide.</li><li>• If they accept, walk slowly, wait for permission.</li><li>• Identify landmarks.</li><li>• Be precise and descriptive with information.</li><li>• Don't walk away without saying goodbye</li><li>• Be patient, interactions may take longer.</li></ul>

### **Hearing Disabilities:**

Definition:	Tips For Serving Customers:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A person with a hearing loss may be deaf or hard of hearing.</li><li>• Like other disabilities, hearing loss has a wide variety of degrees.</li><li>• A person with a hearing impairment may require assistive device when communicating.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attract the customer's attention before speaking – gentle touch on the shoulder or wave of your hand.</li><li>• Look at and speak directly to the person.</li><li>• May have to use pen and paper to communicate.</li><li>• Speak clearly; keep hands away from your face.</li><li>• Reduce background noise.</li></ul>

## Physical Disabilities or Disabilities Affecting Mobility:

Definition:	Tips For Serving Customers:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May restrict a person in the following ways:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Control or speed of movements</li><li>○ Coordination and balance</li><li>○ Ability to grasp some objects</li><li>○ Ability to walk long distances</li><li>○ Ability to sit or stand for prolonged periods</li></ul></li><li>• Can be present at birth, result from disease, injury or be temporary.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Speak directly to the person.</li><li>• Ask before you help.</li><li>• Don't touch assistive devices, including wheelchairs unnecessarily unless it is an emergency.</li><li>• Don't leave the person in an awkward, dangerous or undignified position.</li></ul>

## Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities:

Definition:	Tips For Serving Customers:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Intellectual development and capacity that is below average.</li><li>• Can mildly or profoundly limit ability to learn, communicate, do everyday activities and live independently.</li><li>• May be an invisible disability.</li><li>• They may understand you more than you know.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't assume what a person can or cannot do.</li><li>• Use plain language.</li><li>• Take your time, be patient</li><li>• Ask: "Do you understand this?"</li><li>• Provide one piece of information at a time.</li><li>• If you can't understand what is being said, don't pretend. Just ask again.</li></ul>

## Learning Disabilities:

Definition:	Tips For Serving Customers:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May affect how a person receives, expresses or processes information.</li><li>• In many cases individual has average or above average intelligence.</li><li>• May affect language based learning, mathematics, and/or writing, fine motor skills.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Take your time, be patient it may take a little more time for the person to understand and respond.</li><li>• Provide information in a way that works for your customer (i.e. pen and paper)</li><li>• Speak normally, clearly and directly to your customer.</li><li>• Be prepared to explain the information you provide.</li></ul>

## **Mental Health Disabilities:**

Definition:	Tips For Serving Customers:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mental health disabilities include a range of disorders however there are three main types of mental health disabilities – anxiety, mood, behavioural.</li><li>• A person with a mental health disability can look like anyone else; you may not know that a person has a mental health disability unless you are informed of it.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Treat the customer with the same level of respect and consideration.</li><li>• Be confident and reassuring.</li><li>• If the customer is in crisis, ask how best to help.</li><li>• Take the customer seriously.</li><li>• Don't take things personally.</li></ul>

## **Speech or Language Disabilities:**

Definition:	Tips For Serving Customers:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May have problems communicating.</li><li>• May be difficult to pronounce words, slurring or stuttering.</li><li>• May use communication boards or other assistive devices.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't make assumptions.</li><li>• Give whatever time they need to get their point across.</li><li>• Ask questions that can be answered 'yes' or 'no', if possible.</li><li>• Don't interrupt or finish your customer's sentences.</li><li>• Say: "I don't understand, can you please repeat that?"</li></ul>

## **Deafblind Disability:**

Definition:	Tips For Serving Customers:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cannot see or hear to some extent, this results in greater difficulties in accessing information and managing daily activities.</li><li>• Many will be accompanied by an Intervenor, a professional who helps with communicating.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Speak directly to your customer, not to the intervenor.</li><li>• Identify yourself to the intervenor.</li><li>• A customer who is deafblind may have a card or note explaining how to communicate with them.</li></ul>

## **Support Persons**

The Town of Georgina will allow a person with a disability, who requires, to be accompanied by a support person into all Town premises that are owned or operated public facilities. Both persons are permitted to enter the premises together and the person with a disability will have access to their support person.

Staff will direct all communication to the person directly and not the support person, unless instructed to do so.

Any confidential information such as tax information, personal information etc. that is discussed in the presence of a support person will be identified as such prior to the information being released and the person with the disability will determine if the information can be released in the presence of the support person.

In some incidences where confidentiality is important because of the nature of the information being discussed, the support person may be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

The Town of Georgina may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when accessing goods and services, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises. Persons with a disability are free to accept a reasonable risk of injury to them just as others do.

A support person, when assisting a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Town's goods and/or services, will be permitted to attend at no charge where an admission fee is applicable.

## **Service Animals**

The Town of Georgina allows a person with a disability to be accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal onto all Town of Georgina owned and operated public facilities and will ensure that the person is permitted to keep the animal with him or her unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law.

For the purpose of these Guidelines and in support of the Corporate Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy a service animal for a person with a disability is:

- a) if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
- b) if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

If the service animal is excluded by law, i.e. where food is prepared, the Town of Georgina will ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Town of Georgina's goods and services.

Where a service animal is excluded by law from the premises, the reason why the animal is excluded shall be explained to the person with a disability.

Town of Georgina staff may request a letter from a physician or nurse confirming the person who requires the assistance of a service animal or guide dog to validate that the animal is as defined above by producing a certificate.

The guide dog or service animal must be in the care and control of the person with a disability while accessing goods and services at the Town of Georgina.

Staff will not touch, handle, feed or speak to the guide dog or service animal.

If the Town of Georgina is providing ongoing services to a person with a service animal or in other special circumstances the Town of Georgina may request to maintain a copy of the letter. A copy of the letter should only be kept when necessary and only for as long as necessary. Collection of this information must adhere to all privacy and protection acts.

### **Notice of Service Disruption**

Notice of Service Disruptions shall be provided when facilities or services that people with disabilities usually use to access Town of Georgina goods or services are temporarily unavailable or if the goods or service are expected in the near future to be temporarily unavailable, in whole or in part.

The Notice must include the following information:

- a) The reason for and information about the disruption
- b) Anticipated duration
- c) Description of alternative facilities or services, if available
- d) Contact information

When a disruption is known in advance or planned, a Notice of Disruption of Service will be posted 2 weeks prior to a service disruption whenever possible. Unexpected disruptions in service shall be posted as soon as possible.

Notices may be given by posting the information in a conspicuous place on the premises, on the Town's website or any other such method as is reasonable in the circumstances, for example:

- a) On the Town of Georgina owned, leased or operated buildings or property, on the front doors.
- b) In the local newspaper
- c) After hours service line



- d) LED Display Boards where appropriate
- e) Voicemail where appropriate
- f) Or by other method as appropriate

Each department will appoint a designated person and back up person to be responsible for posting and maintaining the notice of service disruption.

Notices and signage that are written will take into consideration the Clear Print Accessibility Guidelines from the CNIB available at:

<http://www.cnib.ca/en/services/accessibilities/resources/clearprint/Default.aspx>

All service disruption notifications will be logged and recorded with the details of the service disruption and when the disruption was rectified. The department appointed person and/or backup person shall be responsible for maintaining the record.

Refer to Appendix 1 and 2 for sample Notice of Service Disruption Forms.

## **Training**

The Town of Georgina shall ensure that the following persons will or have received training regarding the provision of its goods and services to persons with disabilities.

- 1) Every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Town of Georgina, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise.
- 2) Every person who participates in developing the Town of Georgina's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to members of the public or other third parties.

The training shall include but is not limited to the following:

- 1) Review of the purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Ontario Regulation 429/07;
- 2) Instructions on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
- 3) Instruction on how to interact with people with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a guide dog, other service animal or support person;
- 4) Instruction on how to use equipment or devices available at Town premises or that you otherwise provide, that may help people with disabilities access our services, such as TTY telephones, elevators, lifts, accessible interactive kiosks, listening devices or other technology; and

- 5) Instruction on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing the Town of Georgina's services.

Training shall be provided to each person as soon as practicable and training records shall be maintained to ensure compliance with the legislation.

The Human Resources Division will record the content of the training provided, the name of the person, number of persons trained, location and date the training was completed.

New employees will be trained on the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service as indicated in the AODA as part of their orientation package or as soon as practicable in the case of a new employee or if an employee changes positions.

Training must be provided as soon as practicable, to affected individuals if the Town of Georgina's policies, procedures or practices change in connection with the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities.

### **Feedback Process**

The Town of Georgina shall establish a process for receiving and responding to feedback regarding the manner in which the Town of Georgina provides goods or services to persons with disabilities and shall make information about the process readily available to the public.

The feedback process will permit persons to provide feedback in person, by telephone, in writing, by email, online, on disk or by other method. Feedback will also be received on the Customer Feedback Form provided within each Department.

Feedback Forms are to be posted in conspicuous locations throughout the organization. The forms are directed to the appropriate Department (Director) and accessibility issues are forwarded to the Town Clerk for follow-up.

Under the following conditions staff will complete the form for the person who is providing the feedback:

- 1) Feedback is from a person who is unable to provide written information due to their disability.
- 2) Feedback is received over the telephone.

Staff will repeat back the information taken to the person providing the feedback to ensure it has been accurately recorded.

When a complaint regarding the accessibility of goods or services within the Town of Georgina is received for response the complaint will be forwarded to the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk will respond within 14 business days to the person and will include what actions will be taken to address and or improve the area of concern. The response could be in written format such as a letter or email or verbal such as in person or over the telephone or alternative method as appropriate.

### **Notice of Availability of and Format of Documents**

The Town shall provide notice that upon request it will provide a copy of the following policies, procedures and practices as required to any person under Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Ontario Regulation 429/07.

- Town policies, practices and procedures on the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities – including a policy on the use of personal assistive devices by persons with disabilities to access Town goods or services.
- Service animals and support persons – Policy, practice and procedures with respect to the entry of service animals and support persons to those areas of the premises that are owned or operated by the Town, where such are open to the public.
- Notice of temporary disruption – the steps that will be taken in connection with a temporary planned or unexpected disruption to facilities or services that persons with disabilities usually use to access Town goods or services.
- Training – description of the Town policy on providing training on accessible customer service.
- Feedback Process– description of the process for receiving and responding to feedback on the manner in which the Town provides goods or services to people with disabilities

Should the Town of Georgina be requested to provide a person with a disability any document noted in this section, the Town of Georgina will give the person the information contained in the document, in a format that takes into account the person's disability.

If a person with a disability asks for a document in a different format, staff will discuss what options are available to the individual and then agree upon the format the Town will provide.

The timeframe attached to the conversion process varies depending on the media chosen, the size, complexity and quantity of documents to be converted. Documents shall be returned in a timely manner depending on the factors previously noted.

Conversion shall be processed in-house whenever possible. When a member of the public requests a piece of Town documentation in an alternate format the department of origin shall be responsible for the cost of the conversion, materials and distribution, not the public requestor.

**Contact:**

For more information about this policy, procedures and practices or questions related to accessibility at the Town of Georgina, please contact:

Roland Chenier, Town Clerk  
26557 Civic Centre Road  
Keswick, On L4P 3G1  
905-476-4301 Ext. 257

Claire Marsden, Human Resources Manager  
26557 Civic Centre Road  
Keswick, On L4P 3G1  
905-476-4301 Ext. 249

**Cross-References:**

**Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07**

**Compliance Manual: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07**

**AccessOn:** [www.accesson.ca](http://www.accesson.ca)


**Town of Georgina Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy**

**Town of Georgina Accessibility Plan**



## Accessible Customer Service





Presented By: Lisa Lyons & Caroline Probst

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## Learning Outcomes

- Purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)
- Requirements of the Customer Service Standard
- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with a person with a disability who may use an assistive device or require the assistance of a support person, guide dog or other service animal
- How to use equipment or devices available on the Town's premises that help with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability
- How the AODA, Accessible Customer Service Standard impacts your job
- Review of the Corporate Policy and Guidelines

Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.2

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## Agenda

- Background
- Legislation
- Customer Service Standard
- Accessible Customer Service
- Small Group Exercise
- Assistive Devices
- Alternate Formats
- Notice of Service Disruption
- Feedback
- Simulation
- DVD
- Assisting Customers
- Closing



Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.2

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## Background



- Approximately 1.85 million Ontarians (15.5%) have a disability, that's 1 in every 7 Ontarians
- As the population ages that number will grow
- In 2026 approximately 16% of people in Canada will have a disability
- The Royal Bank has reported that persons with disabilities have spending power of \$21-\$25 billion a year in Canada

Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.3

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## Legislation

Human Rights Code, ODA

**Human Rights Code - Duty to Accommodate**

**Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)**

**Purpose:** To improve opportunities for people with disabilities by identifying and removing barriers to full participation.

- Applies to broader public sectors only
- Annual Accessibility Planning Process
- Creation of Accessibility Directorate of Ontario
- Accessibility Advisory Committee required for municipalities over 10,000.
- No standards and limited enforcement



Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.3

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## Legislation


Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)

**Purpose:**

- To achieve a fully accessible Ontario by 2025
- Develop accessibility standards
- Enforce the standards

**The AODA applies to public and private sectors**

- Municipalities and Government Ministries
- Hospitals
- Schools, Colleges and Universities
- Public Transit
- Stores, Restaurants, Dental Offices...



Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.3

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## Legislation

### AODA Five Standards

1. Customer Service
2. Transportation
3. Information and Communication
4. Employment
5. Built Environment



Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.3

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## Legislation

### AODA Compliance and Enforcement

- Compliance is required in all sectors within specified timeframes
- Electronic Accessibility Reports will be required
- Compliance may be verified by inspectors appointed by the Accessibility Directorate
- Penalties may be issued for non-compliance



Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.3

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## Customer Service Standard

### AODA

- Became law January 1, 2008.
- Compliance for all municipalities January 1, 2010
- Requires:
  - Accessible customer service policy, procedures and practices
  - Communication
  - Assistive devices, service animals and support persons be allowed to accompany a person with a disability
  - Staff to be trained
  - A method to receive and respond to feedback
  - Notice of Service Disruption



Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.4

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## Accessible Customer Service

- Meeting the needs of an individual customer through **flexible service**
- Putting the **person first**
- Work with your customer to **find a method** of service that works for them
- Being open to **comments and suggestions** with the goal of improving accessible customer service
- Ensuring adequate **notice** is **provided** if a disruption is to occur



Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.4

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## Accessible Customer Service

### 4 Principles



- Dignity
- Independence
- Integration
- Equal Opportunity

Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.5

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## Disabilities

- Vision
- Hearing
- Physical
- Intellectual
- Learning
- Mental Health




Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.6

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## Disabilities

- Speech or Language
- Deaf-Blind
- Other conditions: cancer, diabetes, asthma...
- Temporary disabilities





Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.6

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## Communication Tips

- Put the Person First
- Ask "How may I help you?"
- Speak directly to the customer
- Don't make assumptions, always ask
- Focus on meeting your customer's needs
- All customers have a range of needs and preference and so do your customers with disabilities



Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.7

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## Communication Tips

- If you can't understand, politely ask to repeat it
- Ask if the information you are conveying needs to be repeated. "Is there anything you would like me to repeat?"
- Exercise patience
- Recognize your nervousness and relax
- Don't be afraid to ask questions when you are unsure of what to do



Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.7

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## Barriers

### to providing accessible customer service

- Physical Barriers
- Communication Barriers
- Systemic Barriers
- Attitudinal Barriers



Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.8

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## Case Study

- You will work in small groups to complete the case study
- Consider the 4 principles of accessible customer service as you complete this exercise
- Consider any barriers you may encounter as you complete the case study
- We will reflect upon the results of the exercise as a large group



Accessible Customer Service ■

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## Assistive Devices

**Assistive Device Equipment:**  
wheelchairs, scooters, canes, walkers, braces, computer programs, TTY machine, and many other items

**Service Animals**

**Support Persons:**  
PSW, Intervener, Guide or Sign Language Interpreter



**What assistive devices are at your work location?**

Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.9-12

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## Alternate Formats

- Large Print
- Electronic
- Braille
- Sign Language
- Closed Caption
- Audio
- Read information aloud
- Write down instructions
- Draw a diagram





Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.13

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## Notice of Service Disruption

Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.14

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## Feedback

- Process has been developed to receive and respond to feedback
- Respects abilities – allows customers to respond in their preferred format – paper, email, in person or other method
- Customers might require assistance
- Complaints and concerns regarding accessibility must be addressed



Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.15

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## Simulation Activity

- You will work in small groups or partners to complete this activity
- Consider the barriers you may encounter as you complete the activity
- We will share the results as a large group



Accessible Customer Service ■ 22

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## DVD

### Talk to Me



### Serving Customers with Disabilities

Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.16 23

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## What to do if someone is having difficulty accessing our services:

- Ensure people with disabilities are able to participate in the community by **removing barriers**
- Understand** the needs of your customer by taking the time to listen
- Ask "May I help you and how can I help?"
- Be **open** to working with your customer to find the best solution




Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.17 24

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## What to do if someone is having difficulty accessing our services:

- Offer **several of methods** of communication
- **Understand** the comprehensiveness of **services you provide** (nature and scope)
- Show **respect** to all your customers by giving them your full attention
- Encourage the customer to provide **feedback**



Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook p.17 25

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## Summary



- How does this information apply to you at work?
- Have you learned something about accessibility and people with disabilities?
- Other resources



**Thank-you!**

Accessible Customer Service ■ Refer to Workbook - Resources 26

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