



POLICY

Subject: Customer Service Policy	Policy #:	POL-H12-01
Originating Document:	Effective:	2008
Department: Human Resources	Reviewed:	July, 2023
Approved by: CAO	Page:	1 of 10

1. SCOPE:

This Policy applies to every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Town of Smooth Rock Falls, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer, and contractor or otherwise.

2. POLICY STATEMENT:

In providing good accessible customer service the Town of Smooth Rock Falls shall use reasonable efforts to ensure that policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles:

1. Goods and services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
2. The provisions of the goods or services to persons with disabilities, and others, will be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use of benefit from the goods or services.
3. Persons with disabilities will be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods and services.
4. Persons with disabilities may use assistive device and/or support persons in the access of goods and services.
5. That the Town of Smooth Rock Falls employees, when communicating with a person with a disability, shall do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

3. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS:

a) ASSIVE DEVICES:

Means an auxiliary aid such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids (e.g. canes, crutches, wheelchairs, or hearing aids)

b) DISABILITIES:

Means the same as definition of disability found in the Ontario Human Rights Code.

c) EMPLOYEES:

Shall mean every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Town of Smooth Rock Falls, whether the person does do as an employee, agent, volunteer, and contractor or otherwise.

d) PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES:



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Means individuals that are afflicted with a disability as defined under the Ontario Human Rights Code

e) **SERVICE ANIMALS:**

Means any animal that is of service to a person with a disability

f) **SUPPORT PERSON:**

Means in relation to the person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communications, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services. O. REG. 429/07, s 4(8)

4. POLICY:

4.1 **Legislative Authority**

4.1.1 The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07, was created under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). The standard came into effect on January 1, 2008. It sets out obligations for certain persons, businesses and other organizations to provide goods or services in a way that is accessible to people with disabilities in Ontario.

4.2 **Principles**

4.2.1 Accessible Customer Service Follows four basic principles:

- a. **Dignity** – service is provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to maintain self-respect and the respect of other people
- b. **Independence** – when a person with a disability is allowed to do things on their own without unnecessary help or interference from others.
- c. **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 alternative measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability to access goods or services.
- d. **Equal Opportunity** – service is provided to a person with a disability in such a way that they have an opportunity to access your goods or services equal to that given to others.

4.2.2 These basic principles will be taken into account when serving individuals with disabilities.



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4.2.3 Staff will do the following:

- a. Question what can you do to help people with disabilities access our services?
- b. Ask the individual “How can I help?”
- c. When communicating with a person with a disability, do so in a manner that takes into account the person’s disability.
- d. Offer a variety of methods of communication.
- e. Understand the nature and scope of the service you offer.

4.3 Existing Policies, Practices and Procedures

4.3.1 Existing Policies, practices and procedures will be reviewed and revised on an ongoing basis as gaps in policies are identified and impact the ability to provide goods or services to customers with disabilities. Feedback from customers will be used to identify policy gaps.

4.4 Assistive Devices

4.4.1 Every employee shall use reasonable efforts to allow persons with disabilities to use their own assistive devices to access goods and/or services

4.5 Service Animals

4.5.1 Service animals, such as guide dogs, offers independence and security to many people with various disabilities. If it is questionable whether an animal is a service animal, a person may be asked to provide a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons related to a disability.

4.5.2 Every employee shall allow persons with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal unless the animal is excluded by law. Where an animal is excluded by law from the premises, the reason why the animal is excluded shall be explained and other reasonable arrangements to provide goods or services shall be explored with the assistance of the person with the disability.

4.5.3 The service animal shall be under the care and control of the person with the disability. If a service animal is unruly or disruptive, an employee may ask the person with the disability to remove the animal from the area,



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and other reasonable arrangements to provide goods or services shall be explored with assistance from the person with a disability.

4.6 Support Person(s)

- 4.6.1 Support person(s) assist people with disabilities in a variety of ways, by assisting with communication such as an intervener sign language interpreter, or as a Personal Support Worker providing physical assistance. A support person may also be a friend or relative that will assist and support the customer.
- 4.6.2 If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, the Town of Smooth Rock Falls shall ensure that both persons are permitted to enter the premises together and that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the support person while on the premises.
- 4.6.3 In the event that admission fees are charged, there will be no charge to the support person.
- 4.6.4 The Town of Smooth Rock Falls may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises.

4.7 Service Disruption – Notice

- 4.7.1 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, service to and elevator, or technology that is temporarily unavailable. If disruption in service is planned, and expected, it is important to provide reasonable notice.
- 4.7.2 Notice of the disruption must include information about the reason for the disruption its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities. See Appendix “A”
- 4.7.3 There will be notices provided on the website, signs posted at appropriate sites, mail communication and if suitable, the disruption will be advertised in local newspaper or radio a week in advance of the disruption.



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4.8 Unexpected Disruption in Service – Notice

- 4.8.1 In the event of an unexpected disruption in service, notice may be provided in an appropriate manner and as quickly as possible.
- 4.8.2 Notice will be provided on the website, signs will be posted at appropriate site, and if suitable advertised on a local radio station.
- 4.8.3 In the event of a series of disruptions, alternative methods of service may be considered and those impacted by service interruption shall be informed of any alternative methods.

4.9 Format Documents

- 4.9.1 If a copy of a document is requested in a different format than available to accommodate a person with a disability, the Town of Smooth Rock Falls will make every attempt to provide the information requested in a format that is useful to the individual.

4.10 Documentation

- 4.10.1 Notice that the Town has an Accessibility Customer Service Standard Policy will be posted at a conspicuous place or premises operated by the Town of Smooth Rock Falls and posted on the Town’s website.
- 4.10.2 A copy of the documents will be given upon request and consideration will be given to format to accommodate a person’s disability.

4.11 Training

- 4.11.1 Training on Accessible Customer Service Standards will be as follows:
 - a. Training will be given to every person who participates in developing the policy, practices and procedures under Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.
LEVEL 1: **Municipal:** Training will be given on every person who deals with the public on behalf of Town of Smooth Rock Falls e.g. employees, agents, volunteers, management.
LEVEL 2: **Third Partied & Contract Agencies:** The training requirement for the following individuals will be met by requiring that they provide copies of their policy and procedures regarding Accessible Customer Service to the municipality as proof of training being provided.



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- b. Training will include:
 - i. A review of the purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard.
 - ii. How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.
 - iii. How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person.
 - iv. How to use equipment or assistive devices available on our premises, or that otherwise provided, that may help with the provision so goods or services to people with disabilities.
 - v. What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing our goods or services.
 - vi. The accessibility Customer Service Standard Policy for the Town of Smooth Rock Falls.
- 1. New employees, agents, volunteers, management, etc. shall receive training as soon as “practicable” after being assigned.
- 2. Ongoing training in respect of any changes to policies and plans as well as to accessibility laws and the human rights code as it pertains to persons with disabilities will be provided on an ongoing basis.
- 3. The method and amount of training shall be geared to the trainee’s role in terms of accessibility.
- 4. Training records shall be kept, including the dates when the training is provided, and the names of the individuals to whom the training was provided.

4.12 Feedback

4.12.1 Feedback from customers gives the Town of Smooth Rock Falls the opportunity to learn and improve. The Municipality encourages individuals to make suggestions on ways to improve our services, and recognize the rights of customers to make a complaint.



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4.12.2 To ensure that the delivery of goods and services to those individuals with disabilities is provided in an affective and timely manner, the customer is invited to provide their feedback as follows:

In writing, in person, e-mail, telephone, (or any other agreed upon method addressed to:

Town of Smooth Rock Falls
142 First Avenue, P.O. Box 249
Smooth Rock Falls, ON P0L 2B0

Email: townhall@townsrf.ca
Phone: 705-338-2717 Ext 3
Fax: 705-338-2584

Administration will respond either in writing, in person, by e-mail or telephone (or any other agreed upon method) acknowledging receipt of feedback and will set out the action to be taken in response to any complaints or suggestions.

Feedback will be encouraged by Town Staff and the process for feedback will be explained to customers and posted on the Town website.

Feedback will be used to assist with the revision of policies and procedures to provide accessible customer service.

See Customer Feedback Form “Appendix B”



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THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF SMOOTH ROCK FALLS

APPENDIX "A"

NOTICE OF SERVICE DISRUPTION

Type of Disruption _____

Reason for Disruption _____

The service disruption is located at _____

Duration of Disruption _____

Alternative Facilities or Service (if applicable) _____

On behalf of the Town of Smooth Rock Falls, we would like to thank you for your patience and apologize for any inconvenience.

Thank you,

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF SMOOTH ROCK FALLS



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APPENDIX "B"

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK FORM

At the Town of Smooth Rock Falls we value our customers and strive to meet everyone’s needs.

This completed form will assist us in determining if there are areas where we need to improve in order to serve you better.

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

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

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

YES SOMEWHAT NO (please explain below)

Did you have any problems accessing our good and services?

YES (please explain below) SOMEWHAT NO (please explain below)

Please add any other comments you may have: _____

Your contact information (optional): _____

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

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Date Received: _____ Date Action Taken: _____

Action Taken: _____



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ATTACHMENT "A"

To Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy

RECEIPT & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have received and read a copy of the **Accessible Standard for Customer Service Policy**.

- I also understand that the contents of this policy may change from time to time.
- I understand that my signature below indicates that I have received a copy of the **Town of Smooth Rock Falls Accessible Standard for Customer Service Policy**, have read, and understood the policy.
- I understand that, should the content of this document be changed in any way, **The Town of Smooth Rock Falls** may require an additional signature from me to indicate that I am aware of, and understand any new changes.

Employee Name (please print)

Signature

Date