

Section K General Employment Policies	Policy Title and Number K-6 Accessible Customer Service Providing Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities
Effective Date: May 11, 2008	Revision Date:

Purpose:

The Township of Central Frontenac is committed to providing service in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our goods and services and allow them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other customers.

1. Legislative Authority:

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) Ontario requires that the province become fully accessible to people with disabilities by 2025. Under the act, the province is developing five accessibility standards that organizations will be required to follow to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility.

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) came into force on January 1, 2008. The Township of Central Frontenac, as a designated Public Service organization, is required to be in compliance with the standard by January 1, 2010. The standard sets requirements in a number of key areas and will be reviewed provincially at least every five years.

2. Scope:

The Township of Central Frontenac is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities.

This policy applies to all Township employees, including full-time, part-time, and temporary employees, summer students and co-op placements and persons acting on behalf of the Township (e.g. consultants, contractors)

3.0 Definitions:

“Alternative Service” means a service generally intended to be temporary that approaches the desired result until such time as the barrier is removed or an equivalent service is put in place;

“Assistive Device” means an auxiliary aid such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids (i.e. canes, crutches, wheelchairs or hearing aids);

“Contractor” means a company or person with a formal or informal contract to do a specific job on behalf of the Township of Central Frontenac

“Customer” means any person who receives or seeks to receive goods or services from a person or organization in the private, public and non-governmental sector. Customer includes persons who involuntarily receive goods or services imposed by an external authority;

“Disability” means the same as the definition of disability found in the Ontario Human Rights Code;

“Equivalent” means having similar effects or identical effects;

“Service Animal” means any animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability as defined in Ontario Regulation 429/07;

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

4.0 Establishment of Policies, Practices and Procedures:

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

4.1.1 Goods or services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;

4.1.2 Persons with disabilities will be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods or services;

4.1.3 The Township will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability including accessible notifications and respond to questions;

4.1.4 That the Township of Central Frontenac employees will be trained to communicate, provide appropriate assistance and services in a manner that takes into account the person’s disability;

4.1.5 Where fees for goods and services are advertised or promoted by the Township, it will provide advance notice of the amount payable, if any, in respect of the support person.

4.2 Notice of Temporary Disruptions

4.2.2 Township of Central Frontenac will provide customers with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information regarding:

(i) the reason for the disruption;

(ii) its anticipated duration; and

(iii) a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notice will be posted at all public entrances and service counters on our premises and on the Township’s web site.

4.3 Use of Assistive Devices, Support Persons and Service Animals

4.3.2 The Township of Central Frontenac will provide customers assistance in the use of assistive devices;

4.3.3 Support persons and/or support animals may accompany a person with disabilities in the access of goods and services.

4.4 Documentation

4.4.1 When required by Regulation any documentation requested by a person with a disability, shall be given in a format that accommodates the person’s disability.

4.5 Training

4.5.1 The Township will provide training to all employees and volunteers or other third parties who deal with the public on their behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approval of policies, practices and procedures;

- 4.5.2 The Township will ensure that contractors, agents and other third parties who deal with the public on their behalf have been trained and are aware of the Township's policies, practices and procedures;
- 4.5.3 Applicable staff will be trained on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way goods and services are provided to people with disabilities. Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures;

This training will be provided within 6 months of a person commencing employment with the Township of Central Frontenac.

Training will include the following:

- The purposes of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the customer service standard;
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person;
- How to use the equipment and devices available on Township premises that may help with the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities;
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Township of Central Frontenac's goods and services;
- Township of Central Frontenac policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard.

5.0 Feedback Process

The ultimate goal of the Township of Central Frontenac is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving customers with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way the Township of Central Frontenac provides goods and services to persons with disabilities can be made using the following methods.

- (i) by e-mail at clerk@centralfrontenac.com
- (ii) verbally or
- (iii) by completing and submitting an accessibility feedback form;

All feedback will be directed to the Clerk's Department. Customers can expect a response within five (5) working days.

6.0 Modifications to this Policy

- 6.1 We are committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities.
- 6.2 This policy exists to achieve service excellence to customers with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of a policy is not understood, an explanation should be provided by, or referred to the CAO/Clerk of the Township of Central Frontenac.