

Accessibility Standard for Customer Service

Training Objectives

- Understand the purpose and requirements of the Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)
- Learn how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability
- Learn what to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing our services
- Learn 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

What is the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act?

- The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is a law in Ontario that allows the government to develop and enforce specific standards for accessibility
- Recognizing the history of discrimination against people with disabilities in Ontario, the purpose of the Act is to benefit all Ontarians by:
- Developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities in respect to goods , services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

- Accessible customer service is not about ramps or automatic door openers
- It's about understanding that people may have different needs
- Accessibility Standard for Customer Service is simply about providing good customer service to everyone
- The accessibility standard applies to all organizations in Ontario that:
 - provide goods and services
 - has one or more employees

Accessibility Standard for Customer Service Requirements

- Establish policies and procedures on providing goods and services to people with disabilities
- Make reasonable efforts to ensure that policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity
- Have a policy dealing with people's use of their own assistive devices to access goods or services
- Communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account their disability
- Let people with disabilities bring their service animals onto the parts of the premises open to the public or other third parties, except when the animal is excluded by law from the premises

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Requirements

- Let people with disabilities be accompanied with their support persons while on the premises open to the public
- Provide notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities usually use to access goods or services are temporarily disrupted
- Train anyone who interacts with the public or other third parties on the provider's behalf on topics outlined in the customer service standard
- Train anyone who is involved in developing the provider's customer service policies, practices and procedures on topics outlined in the customer service standard
- Establish a process for receiving and responding to feedback about the way the organization provides goods and service to people with disabilities, including the actions to be taken if a complaint is received, and make information about the process readily available to the public

Customer Service Principles

- * **Electromac Group** is committed to providing accessible, quality services and goods to people with disabilities in a manner that promotes dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity

Dignity

- * Service is provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to maintain self-respect and the respect of other people. People with disabilities are not treated as an afterthought or forced to accept lesser service, quality or convenience

Customer Service Principles

Independence

- allowing a person with a disability 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 the person to access goods or services

Equal Opportunity

- People with disabilities have an opportunity equal to that given to others to access your goods and services

Customer Service Guidelines

- * Always introduce yourself to each customer
- * Speak naturally, clearly and directly
- * Make eye contact
- * Use plain language and avoid jargon
- * Ask one question at a time
- * If you cannot understand what your customer is saying, politely ask them to repeat themselves
- * Don't put your hand or other objects such as pens or papers in front of your face when speaking to a customer
- * Be calm, polite and respectful
- * Use appropriate language and terminology when referring to people with disabilities

Terminology

- * When referring to someone with a disability, it is extremely important that you put the person first. It is:
- * “a person” with a hearing impairment – rather than a “deaf person”
- * “a person” with a physical disability
- * “a person” with vision loss



People with Disabilities: Statistics

- * Approximately 1.8 million Ontarians (15.5%) live with a disability
- * This percentage increases as the population ages
- * The number is expected to increase to 1 in 5 Canadians over the next 20 years

Potential Barriers

The purpose of the Customer Service Standard is to remove barriers

Barriers are obstacles that make it difficult, or sometimes impossible, for persons with disabilities to carry out everyday activities

Types of Barriers:

- Physical or architectural
- Information or communication
- Attitudinal
- Technological
- Policy or Practice (organizational)

Who are people with disabilities

- * When we think of disabilities, we tend to think of people who use wheelchairs and who have physical disabilities that are visible or obvious. But disabilities can also be invisible.
- * Types of Disabilities
 - Vision
 - Hearing
 - Physical
 - Intellectual
 - Learning
 - Mental Health
 - Speech or Language



Vision Disability

- * Vision disabilities range from slightly reduced visual activity to total blindness. Vision loss can result in:
- * Difficulty reading or seeing faces
- * Difficulty maneuvering in unfamiliar places
- * Inability to differentiate colours or distances
- * A narrow field of vision

Vision Disability – Tips for Customer Service

- * Don't assume the individual can't see you
- * Speak normally, be patient and friendly
- * Offer assistance, but wait for the person to accept an offer or request help
- * When assisting a person through an unfamiliar area offer your elbow to guide and walk slowly
- * If the person uses a service animal, do not touch or approach the animal, it is working
- * Offer to read or summarize written materials

Hearing Disability

- * There are varying degrees of hearing loss ranging from problems in distinguishing certain frequencies, sounds or words to complete hearing loss
- * A person who is deaf, deafened or hard of hearing may not be able to use a public telephone, understand speech in a noisy environment or pronounce words clearly enough to be understood by strangers

Hearing Disability - Tips for Customer Service

- * When dealing with the customer in person, make sure that the customer sees you and knows you are communicating with him/her
- * In emergency situations, assist the customer in recognizing and responding to the emergency
- * Offer a paper and pen so you can write notes back and forth to share information
- * Be clear and precise when giving information, and repeat or rephrase if necessary. Confirm the customer understands you

Physical Disability

- * Physical disabilities include a range of functional limitations from minor difficulties in moving or coordinating one part of the body, through to muscle weakness, tremors and paralysis
- * **Tips for Customer Service**
 - Always ask before touching or moving any assistive devices
 - Ensure the work environment is clear and free of obstacles that could make it difficult for a customer to pass
 - Be consistent and follow company standards with all customers

Intellectual Disability

- * A person with an intellectual disorder may have difficulty understanding spoken and written information, conceptual information, perception or sensory information and memory

Barriers:

- Difficulties understanding written documents
- Confusion with large quick amounts of information given
- Memory and concentration

Intellectual Disability – Tips for Customer Service

- * Be prepared to explain and provide examples regarding information
- * Remember the person is an adult and can make his/her own decisions
- * Be patient and verify your understanding
- * Provide information in smaller sections

Learning Disabilities

- * Learning disabilities include a range of disorders that affect verbal and non-verbal information acquisition, retention, understanding and processing
- * People with learning disability have average or above average intelligence, but take in and process information and express knowledge in different ways

Learning Disabilities – Tips for Customer Service

- * Respond to any requests for verbal information with courtesy
- * Allow extra time to complete tasks if possible

Mental Health Disabilities

- * Often times, you will not be aware that you are dealing with a person that has a mental health disability and it will not affect the way we provide our products and services. However, you may encounter an individual who is in crisis or is struggling.

Mental Health Disabilities – Tips for Customer Service

- * Listening skills are important when dealing with situations as you will need to understand the real issue to know how you can offer help
- * Ask how you can help and try to work with the individual to find a solution
- * Be confident, patient and reassuring

Speech or Language Impairments

- * Speech and language impairments can result from conditions such as cerebral palsy, hearing loss, or other conditions that make it difficult to clearly pronounce words or make it difficult to communicate with written or spoken language

Tips for Customer Service:

- * If you don't understand it is okay to ask a person to repeat the information or ask closed-ended questions inviting a "yes" or "no" response to help you better understand
- * Ask if you don't understand what the customer is saying

Deaf -Blindness

- * Some persons with deaf-blindness will have some sight or hearing, while others will have neither but rely on their other senses
- * Deaf-blindness interferes with communication, learning orientation and mobility

Tips for Customer Service

- Understand that communication can take some time, please be patient
- Ask the best way to communicate with the customer and respect his/her needs to the maximum extent possible
- Avoid sudden movements or touching of the individual that may catch them off guard, unless it is an emergency

Tips for Working with Support Persons

- * When a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, Electromac welcomes both into our business
- * A support person can be a paid worker, volunteer, family member or a friend and does not necessarily require any special training or certifications to offer support
- * Support persons offer a wide range of assistance including interpretation, speaking on behalf of the customer, note taking, reading, guiding or directing the customer

General Tips for working with a Support Person

- * Address both persons with a salutation
- * “Hi how can I help you”
- * Talk directly to the customer
- * Never separate the customer and their support person

Tips for Working with Service Animals

- * A person with a disability accompanied by a service animal is permitted to enter Electromac with the animal
- * The Accessibility Standards on Customer Service indicates that an animal is a service animal if:
 - * it is readily apparent that the animal is being used for reason related to a person's disability
 - * or if the persons provides a letter from the doctor or nurse confirming that the animal is required for reason relating to the disability

- * Majority of the time the service animal will be a dog. There have been cases of service animals that are monkeys, parrots and other animals that offer critical assistance to persons with disability



Assistive Devices


- * Customers may need to use assistive devices to help them access services
- * Assistive devices enable our customer to everyday tasks such as communicating, reading or moving
- * Below are a few examples of assistive devices:
 - wheelchairs and walkers
 - communication programs
 - listening devices
 - portable oxygen tanks
 - hearing aids



Service Disruptions

- * Service disruption happen for many reasons and can cause hardship and disappointment to all of our customers
- * We will respond and handle service disruptions in a way that supports and informs our customers
- * Service disruptions include:
 - unplanned closures
 - construction barriers
 - inaccessible parking



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- * We will provide notice to temporary disruptions to services or facilities used by person with disabilities. All notices will include the reason for the disruption, how long the service will be unavailable and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available

What you can do to help customers access goods or services

- * All customers have their own specific needs or preferences
- * When a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing services, ask the person how we can make our services accessible

Feedback

- * Customers may provide feedback on the accessibility of the provision of goods and services by Electromac in person, by telephone, in writing or by email to:
Joe Sirianni, Human Resources Director
Electromac Group Inc.
1965 Ambassador Dr.
Windsor, On. N9C 3R5
(519) 969-2951
email – jsirianni@Electromac.com
- * In addition to this method, feedback may be provided by completing the Customer Feedback Form found on the Accessibility section on the Electromac Group website - www.electromac.com

