



**CORPORATION OF THE NATION  
MUNICIPALITY**

**POLICY ON ACCESSIBILITY  
STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER  
SERVICE**

***Ontarians with Disabilities Act,  
2005***

**February 24, 2010**

## **Background**

The accessibility standards for customer service came into force on January 1, 2008. It is the first accessibility standard created under the authority of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*.

All designated public sector organizations must meet all of the requirements of the standard by January 1, 2010 and file a report in 2010.

### **1. SCOPE**

This policy applies to all employees and/or sections within the municipality; all employees and all volunteers and contractors who interact with the public on behalf of the municipality.

### **2. PURPOSE**

This policy is intended to provide goods and services to persons with disabilities and to adapt those services in order to comply with the customer service standard in Ontario Regulation 429/07.

- 2.1 The Nation Municipality is committed to being responsible to the needs of its residents and visitors by recognizing the diverse needs of all its residents and visitors and striving to provide services and facilities that are accessible to all.
- 2.2 The Nation Municipality will promote accessibility through the development of policies, procedures and practices taking into consideration people with disabilities. All reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that these policies, procedures and practices address integration, independence, dignity and equal opportunity.
- 2.3 The Nation Municipality will communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that recognizes that person's specific disability.
- 2.4 The Nation Municipality will ensure that training to staff, volunteers, contractors and those responsible for developing the policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods and services, be provided.
- 2.5 The Nation Municipality will ensure that all reasonable efforts are taken to provide persons with disabilities equal opportunity to obtain, use and benefit from goods and services provided by the municipality.

- 2.6 The Nation Municipality shall ensure that a person with a disability being accompanied by a guide dog or service animal have access in the municipal premises or premises open to the public unless said animal is excluded by law from the premises. If excluded by law, the municipality engages to take other necessary measures to serve the person with a disability.
- 2.7 The Nation Municipality shall ensure that a person with a disability being accompanied by a support person grant access to municipal premises for both the person with disability and the support person. Notice shall be given in advance to the support person if any fee is payable for entry to the premises.

### 3. **PRINCIPLES**

Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure the following:

- 3.1 That goods and services be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- 3.2 That the provision of goods and services will be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or permanent, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services.
- 3.3 That 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. **DEFINITIONS**

- 4.1 **“Person with Disability”**: for the purposes of this policy, “disability” is defined according to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* as:
  - 4.1.1 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, deafness or hearing impediment, physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or in a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
  - 4.1.2 A condition of mental impairment or developmental disability;

- 4.1.3 Learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- 4.1.4 A mental disorder; or
- 4.1.5 An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.
- 4.2 **“Service Animal”**: for the purpose of this Policy, “service animal” is defined as either:
  - 4.2.1 A “guide dog” as defined in Section 1 of the *Blind Persons Rights Act*;
  - 4.2.2 A “service animal” for a person with a disability. For the purposes of this policy, and “animal” is a service animal for a person with a disability;
  - 4.2.3 If it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for the reasons relating to his or her disability; or
  - 4.2.4 If the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.
- 4.3 **“Support Person”**: for the purposes of this policy a support person is defined as a person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help him or her with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

## **5. PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES**

The following departmental practices and procedures shall strive to achieve

- 5.1 Communications will be conducted in a manner that takes into consideration the person’s disabilities;
- 5.2 Staff, volunteers and contractors who interact with the public or who are involved in the development of policies, practices and procedures regarding the provision of goods or services for the municipality will receive appropriate training;
- 5.3 Persons with disabilities accompanied by a guide dog or service animal will be permitted in those areas of the premises owned or operated by the municipality that are typically open to the public unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law.

- 5.4 Persons with disabilities accompanied by a support person will be permitted to be accompanied by that support person in premises normally open to the public.
- 5.5 If an amount is payable by a person for admission to the premises, or in connection with a person's presence at the premises, The Nation Municipality will ensure that notice is given in advance about the amount, if any, payable in respect of the support person.
- 5.6 Notice will be provided when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access The Nation Municipality services are temporarily disrupted.
- 5.7 The Nation Municipality will establish a feedback process to allow people to provide feedback on whether the municipality is providing accessible goods and services.
- 5.8 The Nation Municipality acknowledges that persons with disabilities may elect to use their own personal assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from the services offered by The Nation Municipality.

## **6. FEEDBACK PROCESS**

- 6.1 Should a member of the public wish to make a complaint regarding the accessible provision of goods or services they have received, the member of the public can advise The Nation Municipality of their complaint or concern through the following means:
  - 6.1.1 Make a submission through the on-line feedback form available on The Nation Municipality website [www.nationmun.ca](http://www.nationmun.ca);
  - 6.1.2 Send an email outlining the nature of the complaint or concern to the following address: [mmccuaig@nationmun.ca](mailto:mmccuaig@nationmun.ca);
  - 6.1.3 Contact the Accessibility Coordinator by phone or mail: Mary McCuaig, Accessibility Coordinator, The Nation Municipality, 958 Route 500 West, Casselman, ON K0A 1M0. 613-764-5444 ext. 222;
  - 6.1.4 Contact by telephone the department head or designate responsible for delivering the goods or services for which there is a complaint or concern;
  - 6.1.5 Attend the office and meet the department head or designate responsible for delivering the goods and services for which there is a complaint or concern;

- 6.2 A response will be provided to anyone providing a complaint or comment regarding the provision of accessible goods and services, in the same manner as the complaint or comment was received within 30 days.
- 6.3 If deemed appropriate, a complaint or comment regarding the provision of accessible goods and services may be directed to The Nation Municipality Accessibility Advisory Committee for recommendations on how to address the complaint or comment;
- 6.4 If agreement on the resolution of a complaint cannot be reached between the appropriate department head or designate and the complainant, the matter will be directed to the Chief Administrative Officer for disposition.
- 6.5 If the Chief Administrative Officer is unable to provide a satisfactory resolution to the complainant, the complainant has the option of presenting the complaint to Council for final disposition.

## **7. SERVICE DISRUPTION**

- 7.1 If, in order to obtain, use of benefit from The Nation Municipality's goods or services, persons with disabilities usually use particular facilities or services, e.g. elevators, and if there is a planned temporary disruption in those facilities or services in whole or in part, The Nation Municipality shall give notice of the disruption to the public.
- 7.2 Notice of the disruption must include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or service, if any, that are available.
- 7.3 Notice will be given by posting the information about the service disruption at a conspicuous place on the premises owned and operated by The Nation Municipality, as well as by posting the information on the municipal website ([www.nationmun.ca](http://www.nationmun.ca)) and providing audio messages on the automated telephone attendant for the facility where the service disruption will be taking place. If deemed appropriate and time permits, planned disruptions may also be published in local newspapers.
- 7.4 If a temporary service disruption of the website is planned, advance notice to the extent possible, keeping with the conditions of the service disruption, notice will be given as soon as feasibly possible in the manner described in Section 7.3 above.
- 7.5 In the event of an unplanned service disruption, notice will be given as soon as feasibly possible in the manner described in Section 7.3 above.

## **8. FORMAT OF DOCUMENTS**

- 8.1 Should The Nation Municipality be requested to provide a copy of a document to a person with a disability, The Nation Municipality shall give the person the document, or the information contained in the document, in a format that takes into account the person's disability.
- 8.2 Material printed in-house and publications produced on behalf of The Nation Municipality should contain a note indicating "alternate formats are available on request" and include relevant contact information.
- 8.3 The Nation Municipality will consult the person requesting the document to determine what accessible alternate format of the document or information should be in accordance with the provisions of this policy.
- 8.4 The time frame attached to the conversion process varies depending on the media chosen, the size, complexity, quality or source documents and number of documents to be converted. Documents shall be returned in a timely manner depending on the factors noted above.
- 8.5 Conversion shall be processed in-house whenever possible. When a member of the public requests a municipal document, or portion thereof, in an alternate format, the department of origin shall be responsible for the cost of the conversion, materials and distribution, not the requester.
- 8.6 In-house printing, where possible, should adhere to the CNIB's Clear Print Standards or any subsequent accessible information and communication policies.

## **9. TRAINING**

The customer service standard requires service providers to train staff on providing customer service to people with disabilities. This training must be given to employees who deal with members of the public as well as other third parties who act on behalf of the municipality. Training must also be provided to those who develop policies, procedures and practices for the municipality. Training shall be provided as soon as practicable after a new employee is hired.

- 9.1 The Nation Municipality shall ensure that the following persons are trained on policies, practices and procedures establishing the accessible provision of its goods and services to persons with disabilities:
  - 9.1.1 Every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the municipality, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise.

- 9.1.2 Every person who participates in developing in the municipality's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to members of the public or third parties.
- 9.2 This training will include a review of the purposes of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* and the requirements of this policy and instruction about the following:
  - 9.2.1 How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities, as outlined in this policy and associated practices and procedures.
  - 9.2.2 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, as outlined in this policy and associated practices and procedures.
  - 9.2.3 How to use equipment or devices available on the premises owned or leased by The Nation Municipality that may help in the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability.
  - 9.2.4 What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing goods or services provided by The Nation Municipality.

## **10. ASSISTIVE DEVICES**

- 10.1 The Nation Municipality acknowledges that persons with disabilities may elect to use their own personal assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services by The Nation Municipality.
- 10.2 Should a person with a disability be unable to access the municipality's goods and services through the use of their own personal assistive device, The Nation Municipality will ensure the following measures:
  - 10.2.1 Determine if the provision of the good or service is inaccessible, based upon the individual's requirements;
  - 10.2.2 Assess potential accessible service delivery options to meet the needs of the individual;
  - 10.2.3 Notify the person with a disability of an alternative method of providing the goods or services and how they can access the alternative, temporarily or on a permanent basis.

**Schedule “A”:**  
**Samples of public notice documents for an interruption of services**

**Sample #1:**

“To all clients:

The elevators on the east side will be out of service from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> of April due to regular maintenance. To access the upper level of this building, please use the elevator located on the west side of the building. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause. For any questions, please call (*phone number*).

Thank you

Management”

**Sample #2**

“To all clients:

The accessible washroom is presently out of service due to a damaged pipe. Repairs will be affected tomorrow. In the meantime, we have made arrangements that our clients use the accessible washroom located at 233 Main Street being the building beside this one. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

Thank you

Management”

**Schedule “B”**  
**Samples of notice documents for feedback process**

**Sample # 1**

“To all our clients

We are in the process of improving our accessibility to clients with disabilities. We would appreciate receiving your comments, questions and suggestions concerning the set up and services in our buildings serving our clients with disabilities. Please communicate with the municipal office reception in person, by mail, by telephone at (*phone number*) or by email at (*email address*) to provide your comments.

Thank you

Management”

**Sample # 2**

“To all our clients

We are in the process of improving our accessibility to clients with disabilities. We would be pleased to receive your comments. Please call (*phone number*) or send an email to (*email address*) to let us know your comments and/or to obtain a copy of our accessibility policy.

Thank you

Management”