



Accessibility for Ontarians Customer Service Policy

South Georgian Bay Community Health Centre Policies & Procedures			
Section:	Accessibility	Approved by:	Executive Director
Title:	Accessibility for Ontarians Customer Service Policy	Date:	03/28/2011
Effective Date:	01/24/2022	Applies to:	All Employees
Next Review Date:	01/24/2026	Revised Date:	01/24/2022

PURPOSE:

The [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#) (AODA) 2005, SO, 2005 c 11, has as its stated purpose;

To achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025

South Georgian Bay Community Health Center (SGBCHC) must meet the requirements of accessibility standards established by regulation. This policy establishes the accessibility standards for customer service for the organization, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 429/07.

[The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service](#) apply to every designated public sector organization and to every other person or organization that provides goods or services to members of the public or other third parties and that has at least one employee in Ontario.

POLICY:

This policy applies to SGBCHC's employees who deal with the public or other third parties as well as persons involved in developing SGBCHC's policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties, whether they do so as employees, volunteers, agents, or otherwise.

Definitions

Definitions are as set out in Legislation or Regulation. Unless otherwise noted, definitions are taken from the AODA.

Barrier:

- means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice; ("obstacle").

Disability:



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- means 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, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog, or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability
- A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- A mental disorder, or
- An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*; (“handicap”).

Guide dog:

- means a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having the qualifications prescribed by the regulations; [Blind Persons’ Rights Act 1990 s1 \(1\)](#).

Service animal:

- means an animal acting as a service animal for a person with a disability,
 - if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relation to his or her disability; or
 - if 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.

Agent:

- Any person or organization that provides goods or services on behalf of SGBCHC. This includes but may not be limited to service providers.



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Third Party:

- A generic legal term for any individual who does not have a direct connection with a legal transaction with SGBCHC but who might be affected by it, for example, a participant in a meeting that is held at SGBCHC, or a person who visits SGBCHC office who is a representative of an Agent of SGBCHC, but is not a direct employee of SGBCHC or the Agent.

The [Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation 429/07 \(2005\)](#) was created to establish accessibility standards for customer service in Ontario.

SGBCHC is committed to providing respectful services that focus on the unique needs of the individual.

To achieve this, SGBCHC shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services to the public and other third parties adhere to the following guiding principles as set out in Accessibility Standards for Customer Service: Ontario Regulation 429/07.

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

Communications:

SGBCHC supports an accessible Ontario where the independence and integration of those with disabilities is promoted. When communication with a person with a disability, individuals working on behalf of SGBCHC shall do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability and will make reasonable efforts to have the person with a disability understand both the content and intent of its communications.

Use of Assistive Devices:

SGBCHC:



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- is committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services.
- will ensure that employees are trained on or about the assistive devices made available by SGBCHC.
- does realize that persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices to access SGBCHC's goods and services.

Use of Service Animals:

SGBCHC is committed to welcoming people with disabilities and their service animals on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties and will permit the person to keep the service animal with them. SGBCHC will also ensure that all persons to whom this policy applies have been trained on how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

If the service animal is excluded by law from SGBCHC premises, SGBCHC shall ensure that measures are available to permit persons with disabilities to access SGBCHC's goods and services through other means.

Use of Support Persons:

SGBCHC is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person.

Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter SGBCHC's premises with his or her support person.

At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on SGBCHC's premises.

On occasion persons with disabilities require the assistance of a support person to protect their health and safety or the health and safety of others.

If necessary, SGBCHC may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on SGBCHC premises for the purpose of protecting the health and safety of the person with the disability or others on the premises.



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Notice of Temporary Disruptions in Services and Facilities:

In order to obtain, use or benefit from SGBCHC's services, persons with disabilities usually use particular facilities or services of SGBCHC. If there is a temporary disruption in those facilities or services in whole or part, SGBCHC shall give notice of the disruption to the public.

The notice of the disruption must include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available.

Notice may be given by posting the information at a conspicuous place on premises owned or operated by SGBCHC, by posting it on SGBCHC's website, or by such other method as is reasonable in the circumstances.

Training:

SGBCHC will ensure appropriate levels of training to all employees, volunteers, students, agents and others who deal with the public on behalf of SGBCHC as well as those who are involved in the development and approvals of policies, practices and procedures dealing with the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties.

This training will be provided to all staff and volunteers when practicable in keeping with the requirements of the Regulation.

Training can be found on the Ontario Human Rights Commission's website:

<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/learning/learning>

Records of training will be kept in each person's HR folder that include the dates on which training occurred. Annual staff and volunteer training will be ensured by management.

Training will include the following topics:

- The purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
- The requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.



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- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or support person.
- How to use the assistive devices available at SGBCHC’s office and otherwise made available by SGBCHC for persons with disabilities.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing SGBCHC’s policies, practices and procedures relating to the provision of goods and services to the public and other third parties.

Employees and volunteers will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to policies, practices and procedures dealing with the provision of goods and services to the public and other third parties.

Feedback Process:

This feedback and complaints process applies to feedback and complaints about the manner in which SGBCHC’s goods and services are provided to persons with disabilities.

The ultimate goal of SGBCHC is to meet and surpass customer expectation while serving customers with disabilities. Comments on SGBCHC’s services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Complaints will be addressed according to complaints categories and procedures already established in SGBCHC’s complaint policy/procedure.

Notice and Format of the Availability of the Accessible Customer Service Documents:

SGBCHC shall prepare one or more documents describing its policies, practices and procedures and, upon request, shall give a copy of a document to any person.

Further, SGBCHC shall notify persons to whom it provides services that the documents required under the Regulation are available upon request.

SGBCHC shall give the person the document, or the information contained in the document, in a format that takes into account the person’s disability.



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Modifications to this or other Policies:

SGBCHC is 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.

Relevant policies

- [SGBCHC Client Complaints Policy](#)
- [SGBCHC Employee Complaints Policy](#)

Relevant links:

- [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c11](#)
- [Accessibility For Customer Service Act](#)
- [AODA Customer Service Guide](#)
- [Customer Service Standard Training](#) by Access Forward, Services Ontario, Ministry of Ontario
- [Ontario Human Rights eLearning:](#)
 - [Together The AODA and the CODE](#)
 - [Ableism and Discrimination based on disability](#)
 - [Human Rights 101 \(3rd ed.\)](#)
 - [Duty to Accommodate](#)