

ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY

Purpose

Bereskin & Parr LLP/S.E.N.C.R.L., s.r.l. (the “Firm”) is committed to following the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity (“Principles”) when providing its services. This policy is intended to meet the requirements of the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07* under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA).

AODA was designed to make Ontario more accessible by identifying, removing and preventing barriers for persons with disabilities. The Customer Service Standards aims to provide people with disabilities the same access to goods and services as everyone else.

Scope

- a) This policy applies to the provision of services used or operated by the Firm.
- b) This policy applies to all employees and members of the Firm (“staff”) who deal with the public and third parties that act on behalf of the Firm.
- c) The section of this policy that addresses the use of guide dogs, service animals and service dogs only applies to the provision of services that take place at premises used and operated by the Firm.
- d) This policy shall also apply to all persons who participate in the development of the Firm’s policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of services to members of the public or third parties.

Definitions

For a complete list of the terms and definitions outlined within the policy, please see Appendix A.

The Firm’s commitment to providing service in accordance with the Principles of AODA is demonstrated in the following areas:

1. The Provision of Services to Clients with Disabilities

The Firm will act reasonably to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the Principles by:

- Ensuring that all clients receive the same value and quality;
- Using alternative methods, when possible, to ensure that clients with disabilities have access to the same services, in the same place and in a similar manner;
- Taking into account individual needs when providing services; and
- Communicating in a manner that takes into account the client's disability.

2. Assistive Devices

Clients with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing services provided by the Firm. In cases where the assistive device presents a safety concern, or where accessibility might be an issue, other reasonable measures will be used to ensure the access of services.

3. Guide Dogs, Service Animals and Service Dogs

A client with a disability that is accompanied by guide dog, service animal or service dog shall be allowed access to premises, unless otherwise excluded by law.

The client that is accompanied by a guide dog, service dog and/or service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all times.

If a health and safety concern presents itself, for example in the form of a severe allergy to the animal, the Firm will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals.

4. Support Persons

If a client with a disability is accompanied by a support person, the Firm will ensure that both persons are allowed to enter the premises together and that the client is not prevented from having access to the support person.

In situations where confidential information might be discussed, consent will be obtained from the client, prior to the conversation.

5. Notice of Disruptions in Service

Service disruptions may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of the Firm. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services that clients with disabilities rely on to access or use the Firm's services, reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice. In some circumstances, such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruptions, advance notice may not be possible.

In the event that a notification needs to be posted, the following information will be included unless it is not readily available or known:

- Services that are disrupted or unavailable;
- Reason for the disruption;
- Anticipated duration; and
- A description of alternative services or options.

When service disruptions occur, the Firm will provide notice by posting information on its website.

6. Feedback Process

The Firm shall provide clients with the opportunity to provide feedback on the service provided to clients with disabilities. Information about the feedback process is readily available on the Firm's website. A feedback form along with alternate methods of providing feedback such as verbally (in person and by telephone) will be available upon request.

Clients can submit feedback to the Human Resources Department by contacting the Firm's Director, Human Resources & Administration at 416-957-1674, by emailing accessibility@bereskinparr.com, or by visiting the Firm's website (www.bereskinparr.com) and completing the Feedback Form.

Clients that provide formal feedback will receive acknowledgement of their feedback within five (5) business days, along with any resulting actions based on concerns or complaints that were submitted.

7. Training

Training will be provided to all members of staff and will cover the following:

- A review of the purpose of AODA, 2005.
- A review of the requirements of the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*.
- Instruction to staff on how to use equipment or devices currently available for use from the Firm or otherwise provided by the Firm.
- Instructions on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

- Instructions on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing the Firm's services.
- Instruction on the assistance of people with disabilities using assistive devices or requiring the assistance of a guide dog or service animal.

Initial training is provided as soon as is practicable after staff are assigned applicable duties. Revised training will be provided in the event of changes to legislation, procedures and/or practices.

8. Notice of Availability and Format of Documents

The Firm shall notify clients that the documents related to the *Accessibility Standard for Customer Service* are available upon request and in a format that takes the client's disability into consideration. Notification will be given by posting the information on the Firm's website.

This policy and its related procedures will be reviewed as required in the event of legislative changes.

The Firm will remain committed to revisiting accommodation options if the circumstances change, necessitating a review of the available options.

Appendix A: Terms and Definitions

Assistive Device – is a technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that clients bring with them such as a wheelchair, walker or a personal oxygen tank that might assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering and/or reading.

Disability – the term disability as defined by AODA and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, refers to:

- 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 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.

Guide Dog – is a highly-trained working dog that has been trained at one of the facilities listed in Ontario Regulation 58 under the *Blind Persons' Rights Act*, to provide mobility, safety and increased independence for people who are blind.

Service Animal – as reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if:

- It is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating 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.

Service Dog – as reflected in *Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562* a dog other than a guide dog for the blind is a service dog if:

- It is readily apparent to an average person that the dog functions as a service dog for a person with a medical disability;
- Or the person who requires the dog can provide on request a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires a service dog.

Support Person – as reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, a 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, medical needs or access to services.