



# Accessible Customer Service Policy, Procedures, and Best Practices

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## Intent

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 and applies to the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties, not the goods themselves.

All goods and services provided by the Quality Inn & Conference Centre Kingston Central and Comfort Suites Central (referred to as the Employer), shall follow the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

## Scope

- a) This policy applies to the provision of goods and services at premises owned and operated by the Employer.
- b) This policy applies to employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractors who deal with the public or other third parties that act on behalf of the Employer, including when the provision of goods and services occurs off the premises of the Employer such as in: catering
- c) The section of the policy that addresses the use of guide dogs, service animals and service dogs only applies to the provision of goods and services that take place at premises owned and operated by the Employer.
- d) This policy shall also apply to all persons who participate in the development of the Employer policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to members of the public or third parties.

## 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 guests 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 the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, 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 coordination, 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
- 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 goods and services.

## General Principles

In accordance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07, this policy addresses the following:

- A. The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities
- B. The Use of Assistive Devices
- C. The Use of Guide Dogs, Service Animals and Service Dogs
- D. The Use of Support Persons
- E. Notice of Service Disruptions
- F. Customer Feedback
- G. Training
- H. Notice of Availability and Format of Required Documents

- A. The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities

The Employer will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity by:

- ensuring that all guests receive the same value and quality;

- allowing guests with disabilities to do things in their own ways, at their own pace when accessing goods and services as long as this does not present a safety risk;
- using alternative methods when possible to ensure that guests with disabilities have access to the same services, in the same place and in a similar manner;
- taking into account individual needs when providing goods and services; and
- communicating in a manner that takes into account the guest's disability.

#### B. Assistive Devices

##### Guest's own assistive device(s):

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing goods or services provided by the Employer.

In cases where the assistive device presents a safety concern or where accessibility might be an issue, other measures will be used to ensure the access of goods and services.

*For example, open flames and oxygen tanks cannot be near one another. Therefore, the accommodation of a guest with an oxygen tank may involve extinguishing candles and ensuring the guest is seated in a location that would be considered safe for both the guest and other patrons. Or, where elevators are not present and a guest requires assistive devices for the purposes of mobility, the Employer will make every reasonable effort to provide guestrooms that are easily accessible.*

##### Assistive devices provided by The Employer:

The following assistive devices are available, on a first come first serve basis and upon request, to assist guests in accessing our goods and services:

- Wheelchair

#### C. Guide Dogs, Service Animals and Service Dogs

A guest with a disability that is accompanied by a guide dog, service animal or service dog will be allowed access to premises that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law. "No pet" policies do not apply to guide dogs, service animals and/or service dogs.

##### Food Service Areas:

A guest with a disability that is accompanied by a guide dog or service dog will be allowed access to food service areas that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law.

Other types of service animals are not permitted into food service areas due to the Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562.

##### Exclusion Guidelines:

If a guide dog, service animal or service dog is excluded by law (see applicable laws below) the Employer will offer alternative methods to enable the person with a disability to access goods and services, when possible (for example, securing the animal in a safe location and offering the guidance of an employee).

##### Applicable Laws:

The Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562 Section 60, normally does not allow animals in places where food is manufactured, prepared, processed, handled, served, displayed, stored, sold or offered for sale. It does allow guide dogs and service dogs to go into places where food is served, sold or offered for sale. However, other types of service animals are not included in this exception.

Dog Owners' Liability Act, Ontario: If there is a conflict between a provision of this Act or of a regulation under this or any other Act relating to banned breeds (such as pitbulls) and a provision of a by-law passed by a municipality relating to these breeds, the provision that is more restrictive in relation to controls or bans on these breeds prevails.

#### Recognizing a Guide Dog, Service Dog and/or Service Animal:

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used by the guest for reasons relating to his or her disability, the The Employer may request verification from the guest.

Verification may include:

- a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons related to the disability;
- a valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Ontario; or,
- a certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school.

#### Care and Control of the Animal:

The guest 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.

#### Allergies:

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

#### D. Support Persons

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

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

#### Admission Fees:

In instances where a support person requires a separate guestroom than the disabled guest then they will be offered the best available rate at that time.

In instances where a support person will be attending a food & beverage function they will be charged the regular fee.

Guests/Customers will be notified of this at the time of booking or through any marketing material that may be developed and distributed.

#### E. 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 Employer. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services that guests with disabilities rely on to access or use the Employer's goods or services, reasonable efforts will be made to provide advanced notice. In some circumstances such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruptions, advance notice may not be possible.

#### Notifications will include:

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

- goods or services that are disrupted or unavailable
- reason for the disruption
- anticipated duration
- a description of alternative services or options

*See Appendix A for Notice of Disruption template*

#### Notifications Options:

When disruptions occur, the Employer will provide notice by:

- Front Desk and/or Maintenance posting notices in conspicuous places including at the point of disruption, at the main entrance and the nearest accessible entrance to the service disruption and/or on the Employer website;
- Front Desk and Catering teams contacting guests with reservations, meetings, or conferences;
- Front Desk verbally notifying guests when they are making a reservation; or
- by any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

#### F. Feedback Process

The Employer shall provide guests with the opportunity to provide feedback on the service provided to guests with disabilities. Comments on our service regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome. Feedback forms can be found at the end of this document or you may ask a member of our Front Desk team if you require an alternate format. Disabled guests are able to provide feedback verbally (in person or by telephone) or written (feedback form, letter or email) to the following contact:

*See Appendix B for customer feedback template*

#### Submitting Feedback:

Guests can submit feedback to:

General Manager

T: 613-546-3661 ext.397

E: [ttimmins@diamondhotels.ca](mailto:ttimmins@diamondhotels.ca)

33 Benson St., Kingston, ON K7K 5W2

#### Responding to Feedback:

- Once feedback is received, regardless of method, we will acknowledge receipt of their feedback within 3 days and inform them of the process for addressing and resolving issues

#### Handling Feedback over Phone or in Person:

- Explain to the guest the different methods available to them and ask which option would best suit them;
- If the guest wished to respond verbally, please use the feedback form to ensure that you are capturing the right information and read it back to ensure it is accurate
- Thank them for their feedback and then inform them of the process for addressing and resolving issues

#### Addressing and Resolving Issues:

- Once we receive feedback from a guest, any issues that have been brought up will be discussed at the Department Head meeting to determine how best to handle the situation. Other employees who may have been involved in the process would be consulted as well for feedback.
- Resolution and/or action taken will be communicated back to the guest within 7 days.

- At this point, the feedback form, the action/resolution will be sent to HR to keep on file and log in the Customer Feedback Record.

#### G. Training

Training will be provided to:

- a) all employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractors who deal with the public or other third parties that act on behalf of The Employer; and,
- b) those who are involved in the development and approval of customer service policies, practices and procedures.

#### Training Provisions:

As reflected in Ontario Regulation 429/07, regardless of the format, training will cover the following:

- A review of the purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
- A review of the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07.
- Instructions on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.
- Instructions on how to interact with people with disabilities who:
  - use assistive devices;
  - require the assistance of a guide dog, service dog or other service animal; or
  - require the use of a support person (including the handling of admission fees).
- Instructions on how to use equipment or devices that are available at our premises or that we provide that may help people with disabilities.
- Instructions on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing our services (feedback process).
- The Employer 's policies, procedures and practices pertaining to providing accessible customer service to guests with disabilities.

#### Training Schedule:

The Employer will provide training as soon as practicable. Training will be provided to new employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractor who deal with the public or act on our behalf as part of the onboarding process. Revised training will be provided in the event of changes to legislation, procedures and/or practices.

#### Record of Training:

The Employer will keep a record of training that includes the dates training was provided and the number of employees who attended the training

#### H. Notice of Availability and Format of Documents

The Employer shall notify guests that the documents related to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service are available upon request at the front desk. These documents will be in electronic format and could be printed in larger font should they have difficulty seeing the print, could be emailed to guest, and be in a format that takes into account the guest's disability. Notification will be given by including the information in the in-room directories, at the time of check-in and/or reservation, and/or any other reasonable method.

#### Administration

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy or its related procedures please contact:

Jacquelyn Bragdon

Human Resources Manager

T: 613-650-5420

E: jbragdon@diamondhotels.ca

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

Appendix A - Customer Service Feedback Form

The ultimate goal of the Employer 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 Employer provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made via customer feedback form, e-mail, or verbally. All feedback will be directed to:

General Manager

Tel: 613-546-3661 ext. 397

Fax: 613-544-4126

Email: nkemp@qualitykingston.com

Customers can expect to receive acknowledgement of their feedback within 3 business days.

Please tell us the date and location of your visit:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location (Guestroom/Restaurant): \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Were you satisfied with the customer service we provided you?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat
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Comments

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**2. Was our customer service provided to you in an accessible manner?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat
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Comments

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**3. Did you experience any problems accessing our goods and services?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat
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Comments

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Guest Contact Information (optional)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Best Time of Day to Contact You: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix B

Dear Valued Customers,

The (insert facilities or services that are unavailable) will be out of service for (insert reason for disruption) from (insert appropriate date) until (if known insert appropriate date).

The following alternative services and options are available:

- (list options)
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We regret any inconvenience this may cause. If you have questions or concerns, please contact (Name, Title, E-mail, telephone).

Thank you for your understanding and patience. We appreciate your business, and look forward to seeing you again soon!

Management