



Accessible Customer Service Policy

Statement of Commitment

Our organization is committed to ensuring that our information and services are accessible for all Ontarians and Canadians. This includes providing services and programs that people with disabilities can use and benefit from equally and in a manner that respects their dignity and independence. This policy works in conjunction with our “Accessibility and Inclusion Policy”; attached herein as an appendix for ease.

This policy is based on the following principles:

- Respect for the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.
- Equal opportunity for people with disabilities to access, use, and benefit from our services or programs with the same quality and timeliness that others receive.
- Service integration in relation to services provided to the broader public unless alternative ways of providing the service or program are necessary for equal opportunity.

The standards and rules on providing accessible customer service are set out in the [Accessibility Standards for Customer Service \(Ontario Regulation 429/07\) and Integrated Accessibility Standards \(Ontario Regulation 191-11\)](#).

Our websites and web content, controlled either directly by us or through a contractual relationship, allow us to modify the product(s) as we deem necessary, while conforming to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, at Level AA.

Employment Equity

We are committed to equity and equality in all areas of employment. Our employment practices comply with the Ontario Human Rights Code, which states that every person has a right to equal treatment with respect to employment without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, record of offences, marital status, family status, same-sex partnership status or disability.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to the terms used in this Accessible Customer Service Policy.

Alternate formats: Other ways of publishing information beyond traditional printing. For example:

- Audio format such as cassettes or digital audio format
- Braille used by some people who are blind or deaf-blind
- Videos that may be helpful to people with certain learning disabilities
- Easy-to-read, simplified summaries of materials for people with developmental or intellectual disabilities
- Large print and electronic formats

Assistive Devices: A tool, technology or other mechanism that helps a person with a disability do everyday tasks and activities such as moving, communicating or lifting and maintain their independence at home, at work and in the community (e.g. communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids, medical aids).

Disabilities: As per the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, “disability” means:

- a) 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;
- b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- c) a learning disability or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- d) a mental disorder; or;
- e) 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”)

Persons with Disabilities: Individuals who are afflicted with a disability as defined under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Service Animals: Any animal trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability.

Support Persons: Any person whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member, or friend who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communications, personal care, medical needs, or access to goods or services.

Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities

In our interactions, we will communicate with persons with disabilities in ways that take their disability into account and are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity. We will provide alternative formats and will train staff on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

Information required by a person with a disability will, upon request, be provided in a format or method that considers the person's disability (e.g., email, hard copy, large print, verbally, in person, via telephone, via a support person).

We endeavour to ensure people with disabilities have unencumbered access to use their own assistive devices in obtaining, using, or benefiting from our goods and services. Employees will be trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods or services. Our employees should not operate or otherwise interfere with a person's personal assistive device, unless invited to do so by the user or their support person.

We welcome people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal or a support person on our premises. *Employees should not pet or otherwise distract a person's service animal.*

Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter our 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 our premises. Where confidentiality is of importance, the support person may be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

We endeavour to hold all our events in accessible formats. When registering for events, customers requiring any special assistance or accommodation in relation to a disability should indicate it to us and we will endeavour to meet accommodation needs. Any support person accompanying a person with a disability will not be charged for entrance or registration, but should advise of their attendance in advance wherever possible.

Please note that this policy is subject to change as new standards are introduced and developed, and we encourage you to check back regularly for updates. If you have any questions, feedback, concerns, or requests, please contact us at contact@athive.com.

Appendix: Accessibility and Inclusion Policy



Accessibility and Inclusion Policy

Statement of Organizational Commitment

@Hive is dedicated to ensuring equal access, participation, equity and inclusion for all individuals, including those with disabilities, impairments or particular considerations. We are committed to treating every person with dignity and respect, supporting their independence, and fostering an inclusive environment. In alignment with the [*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2005 \(AODA\)](#), we prioritize the timely removal and prevention of barriers to accessibility. Furthermore, our practices are guided by the Ontario Human Rights Code, which guarantees equal treatment without discrimination based on race, ancestry, place of origin, color, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, same-sex partnership status, or disability. We are committed to upholding these standards to create an equitable workplace and community.

@Hive understands that its obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), and its accessibility standards do not substitute for or limit its obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code or obligations to people with disabilities under any other Act.

Training

We are committed to training all staff and volunteers in accessible customer service, other Ontario accessibility standards, and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to persons with disabilities.

In addition, we will train:

- a) all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies; and
- b) training of our employees and volunteers on accessibility depending on their specific roles.

Training includes:

- our policies related to the Customer Service Standards
- how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities

- how to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- how to use the equipment or devices available on-site or otherwise that may help with providing goods, services or facilities to people with disabilities.
- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing our organization's goods, services or facilities.

We train every person as soon as practicable after being hired and provide training in respect of any changes to the policies.

We maintain records of the training provided through external resources such as webinars, seminars and website information.

Assistive Devices

People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our goods, services or facilities.

In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access our goods, services or facilities.

If applicable, please contact @hive for us to better assist you.

Communication

We communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. We will work with the person with disabilities to determine what method of communication works for them.

Service Animals

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and third parties.

When we cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, our staff may ask for documentation (template, letter or form) from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

A service animal can be easily identified through visual indicators, such as when it wears a harness or a vest, or when it helps the person perform certain tasks.

If service animals are prohibited by another law, we will do the following to ensure people with disabilities can access our goods, services or facilities:

- explain why the animal is excluded
- discuss with the customer another way of providing goods, services or facilities

Support Persons

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises. No guest service charges shall apply.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities, this organization will notify customers promptly. This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notice will be made publicly available in the following ways:

- Signage posted throughout the site
- Notice posted on our website if possible
- An e-mail to staff and clients if possible

Feedback Process

@hive welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Customer feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns.

Feedback may be provided in the following ways:

- **Direct Communication:** If the feedback was given during a one-on-one conversation or through a direct message, we will respond directly to the member to acknowledge their feedback and discuss any actions we plan to take.
- **Newsletters or Emails:** Regular newsletters or emails will be used to update members about changes made based on their feedback.
- **Member Meetings:** We will hold regular member meetings where we can discuss feedback and our responses to it. This will also be a forum for members to voice their thoughts and suggestions.

All feedback, including complaints, will be handled in the following manner:

Formal Complaint Procedure - Upon receiving a formal complaint, @Hive management will:

- **Acknowledge Receipt:** @Hive management will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 48 hours.
- **Investigate the Complaint:** @Hive management will conduct a thorough and impartial investigation, which may involve speaking with relevant parties and reviewing any pertinent documents or evidence.
- **Mediation (if necessary):** If deemed appropriate, @Hive may offer mediation services to assist in resolving the conflict.
- **Provide a Resolution:** @Hive management will communicate the outcome of the investigation and any actions taken to address the complaint within 15 to 20 business days from the date the formal complaint was submitted.

Customers can expect to hear back within 30 business days from the date, the formal complaint was submitted.

- **Escalation** - If a member or employee is dissatisfied with the resolution provided by @Hive, they may escalate the matter to @Hive Senior Management within 5 to 10 business days from the date the resolution was communicated.

Records and Documentation - All formal complaints, investigations, and resolutions will be documented and retained confidentially on a permanent basis.

Non-Retaliation - @Hive prohibits any form of retaliation against members or employees who report complaints in good faith. Any such retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action.

An alternative feedback process for people with disabilities can be arranged upon request.

Notice of Availability of Documents

Upon request, we will provide our policy documents in an accessible format or with communication support. We will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the format or communication support. We will provide the accessible format in a timely manner and, at no additional cost.

Information and Communications

We have a process for receiving and responding to feedback and the process is accessible to persons with disabilities upon request.

We communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. When asked, we will provide information about our organization and its services, including public safety information, in the following accessible formats or communication supports:

- **Alternate formats:** Other ways of publishing information beyond traditional printing. Including but not limited to:
 - Audio format such as cassettes or digital audio format
 - Videos that may be helpful to people with certain learning disabilities
 - Easy-to-read, simplified summaries of materials for people with developmental or intellectual disabilities
 - Large print and electronic formats

It shall be conducted:

- a) in a timely manner, taking into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability; and
- b) at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

We will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability and sustainability of an accessible format or communication support. If the organization determines that information or communications are unconvertible, the organization shall provide the requestor with:

- a) an explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible; and
- b) a summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

We notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports by

- a) providing on site availability on request ; or
- b) email detailing all available formats and communication alongside the booking confirmation if accessibility need is identified

We will also meet internationally recognized Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA website requirements in accordance with Ontario's accessibility laws.

Employment

We notify employees, job applicants and the general public that accommodations can be made during recruitment and hiring. We notify job applicants when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process that accommodations are available upon request. We consult with the applicants and provide or arrange for suitable accommodation where necessary. We shall notify successful applicants of policies for accommodating employees with disabilities when making offers of employment or during onboarding.

We notify staff that supports are available for those with disabilities as soon as possible after they begin their employment. We provide updated information to employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodation that consider an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability.

We will consult with employees when arranging for the provision of suitable accommodation in a manner that considers the accessibility needs of the individual. We will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication supports specifically for:

- a) information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job;
- b) information that is generally available to employees in the workplace; and
- c) information relating to our workplace policies and practices

Where needed, we will also provide customized emergency information to assist an employee with a disability during an emergency. As required by law, we will provide workplace emergency information to a designated person who is providing assistance to that employee during an emergency. A designated person is assigned to an individual requiring such an accommodation at the commencement of their employment, or at any time thereafter, on request by the individual. Our Health and Safety Committee plays a part in overseeing these types of arrangements and therefore, the Committee is provided with any necessary emergency management information.

We will provide the information as soon as practicable after we become aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.

We will review individualized workplace emergency response information in the following situations:

- a) when the employee moves to a different location in the organization;
- b) when the employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed;
- c) when the employer updates its general emergency response policies; or
- d) on request by the individual with the accommodation plan

We have a written process to develop individual accommodation plans for employees.

We have a written process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations to return to work.

Our performance management, career development and redeployment processes take into account the accessibility needs of all employees.

Changes to Existing Policies

Any of our company's policies that do not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

This document is publicly available. Accessible formats are available upon request.