

Introduction

The Travel Industry Council of Ontario (TICO) supports the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA). Ontario Regulation 429/07 sets out the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, also known as the "Customer Service Standard". It became law on January 1, 2008. The TICO is required to be compliant with the Customer Service Standard as of January 1, 2012. This policy has been prepared to outline what the TICO will do to comply with the regulation and what customers may expect from the TICO.

This policy is intended to benefit the full range of persons with disabilities. Section 2 of the AODA defines "disability" as:

- 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 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,
- 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*.

Whether a person's disability is apparent or not, everyone should be treated with courtesy, made to feel welcome, and have their need for accommodation respected whenever they interact with the TICO.

This policy is available in alternate formats upon request.

TICO Mission

The TICO is committed to excellence in serving all customers, including people with disabilities. It strives at all times to

provide goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. The TICO is committed to ensuring that customers with disabilities receive accessible goods and services with the same quality and timeliness as others do.

Communication

The TICO will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. This means that employees will communicate in ways that enable persons with disabilities to communicate effectively for purposes of using, receiving and requesting goods and services.

The TICO will train staff who communicate with customers on how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities. The TICO recognizes that every person and situation is different. TICO staff will work with the individual to find a communication method that meets the person's needs.

Assistive Devices

An assistive device is any piece of equipment a person with a disability uses to help them with daily living. Some examples include: wheelchairs, screen readers, listening devices or canes. The TICO allows the use of personal assistive devices on our premises.

The TICO is committed to serving persons with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from its goods and services. It will ensure that employees know how to use the assistive devices available for customers and to inform customers of the assistive devices that are available.

Use of Service Animals and Support Persons

The TICO welcomes people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of TICO premises that are open to the public or third parties. The TICO will ensure that all staff and third parties dealing with the public are trained in how to interact with persons with disabilities who are accompanied by service

animals.

On rare occasions, a manager may determine that a support person is required, or that a service animal cannot enter an area of the premises consistent with other laws. In these instances, managers will suggest appropriate alternatives and provide assistance.

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter TICO premises that are open to the public or third parties 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 TICO premises.

For any TICO sponsored events where a fee is required to attend, TICO will not charge an admission or attendance fee for support persons. However, expenses may be charged for meals and refreshments provided for support persons. If expenses will be charged, the amount would be included in the information published with respect to the specific event.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for persons with disabilities, the TICO will promptly notify customers. Notice will be provided in accessible formats and include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notice will be placed at the public entrance of the TICO office. Depending on the nature of the disruption, notice will also be provided on outgoing telephone messages and on the TICO website.

Training for Staff

The TICO will provide training on customer service to all employees who provide services to the public and to individuals who are involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies, practices and procedures. This includes staff, board members and others who may represent the TICO. New staff and staff who commence new duties that involve interaction with the public or other third parties will undertake training as part of their orientation, if they

have not already done so.

TICO employee training includes:

- a review of the purposes of the AODA and the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service;
- how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;
- how to interact with persons 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 the provider's premises, or otherwise, that may assist with the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities;
- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing TICO goods or services; and
- TICO policies, practices and procedures relating to the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities.

Staff will be trained, as appropriate, on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way goods and services are provided to persons with disabilities. Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

Feedback Process

This Accessible Customer Service Policy is available on the TICO website. A copy of the policy may also be requested by contacting our office. Customers who have questions or wish to provide feedback on the way that the TICO provides goods and services to people with disabilities can contact Dorian Werda, Vice President, Operations, at the following address:

Travel Industry Council of Ontario

2700 Matheson Blvd. East

Suite 402, West Tower

Mississauga, Ontario

L4W 4V9

Telephone: (905) 624-6241 Ext. 224

Toll Free: 1-888-451-TICO

Fax: (905) 624-8631

E-mail: dwerda@tico.ca

Feedback will be accepted in person, by telephone, in writing or by email. If a feedback method is not suitable, a customer may request another method. TICO's hours of operation can be found on TICO's website at www.tico.ca.

Privacy will be respected and all feedback will be reviewed for possible action that can be taken to improve services. TICO's goal is to become increasingly accessible and responsive to the needs of persons with disabilities.

Complaints will be addressed as soon as possible. However, some complaints may require more effort to address and must be reviewed for action. Customers can expect an acknowledgement within fifteen business days of receipt of the complaint. If a complaint cannot be responded to within fifteen business days, an interim acknowledgement will be sent to the customer. The acknowledgement will indicate when the individual can expect a response. The TICO will endeavour to provide a response to the feedback in a format that is accessible to the complainant.

Modifications to this or Policies

The TICO is committed to ensuring that its customer service policies, practices and procedures respect and promote the dignity and independence of all persons with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on persons with disabilities.

Any policy of the TICO that does not respect and promote the dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

Whenever new or revised standards are developed under the AODA, this

policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure consistency.

Last Revised - April 5, 2016