

AODA: CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS POLICY

BACKGROUND

This policy is intended to demonstrate the College’s commitment to providing a learning environment that welcomes all learners and to comply with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and its accessibility standards. Accessibility standards established under the AODA are being phased in and will become effective over a period of years.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all college community members, and to all College activities, functions and premises.

DISABILITY AS DEFINED UNDER AODA

- 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 service 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*

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PURPOSE

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) aims to establish standards that provide Ontarians with disabilities the same opportunity of access to and benefit from goods, services, facilities, accommodation and employment as are provided to all Ontarians. The AODA applies to post secondary institutions.

1. Northern College is committed to applying the principles and regulations of the AODA to its operations so as to provide equal opportunity of access to persons with disabilities within the College community.
2. Northern College will comply with the guidelines found in the Appendices of this policy. Each appendix deals with a different standard and should be consulted to determine its application.
3. Additional Appendices will be added as new accessibility standards come into effect.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Comply with the accessibility standards established by the AODA, as set forth in the Appendices to this policy.
Responsibility: All Employees
2. Participate in training that is mandated by the AODA and this policy.
Responsibility: All Employees
3. Develop and implement training program(s) for college employees as required by the AODA and this policy.
Responsibility: Human Resource Services & Advising Services

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendix 1 Accessibility Standards for Customer Services provided to Persons with Disabilities

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RELATED POLICIES

Service/Emotional Support Animal Procedure
Accessibility Services Policy and Procedures

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APPENDIX 1

**ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICES PROVIDED TO
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

This Appendix is based on Ontario Regulation 429/07 under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and applied to the College as of January 1, 2010. It establishes the principles and accessibility standards for the goods and services that the College provides to members of the public. It does not apply to the College in its role as employer. However, where a College employee accesses College goods or services, not as an employee, but as a member of the public, the College will apply Appendix 1 to the provision of those goods or services. The Customer Service Standard also does not apply to the College’s responsibilities related to the teaching/learning process, which shall continue to be addressed under the Disability Services Policy and Procedures.

1. Definitions

‘Customers’ refers to members of the public and other third parties to whom the College provides goods or services.

‘Dignity’ allows the person with disabilities to maintain self-respect and the respect of other people.

‘Equal Opportunity’ a person with disabilities has opportunity to access goods or services equal to that given to others.

‘Guide Dog’ means a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having the qualifications prescribed by the regulations *Ontario Blind Persons Rights’ Act R.S.O. 1990, Chapter B.7.*

‘Independence’ is when a person with disabilities is allowed to do things on his or her own without unnecessary help or interference from others.

‘Integration’ allows the person with disabilities to benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in the same or similar way as others, unless an alternate measure is necessary to enable a person with disabilities to access the goods or services.

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‘Service Animal’ means any animal that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.

‘Support Person’ means, in relation to a person with disabilities, 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.

2. Principles for Policies, Practices and Procedures

The College will provide goods and services to members of the public and other third parties based on principles and practices that are consistent with the following:

- 2.1. Persons with disabilities will be given opportunity for goods or service access, use and benefit that is equal to that given to other persons.
- 2.2. Such goods or services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- 2.3. Such services will be integrated with services for other persons, unless an alternate measure is necessary on a temporary or permanent basis.
- 2.4. The College will facilitate the use of assistive devices and other measures that enable service access, use and benefit.
- 2.5. Communication with persons with disabilities will be conducted in a manner that takes into account the person’s disabilities.
- 2.6. Document(s) describing the policies, practices and procedures in this Appendix will be made available to any person on request.
- 2.7. Where such documents are provided to persons with disabilities, the format of the document will take into account the person’s disabilities.
- 2.8. The College will inform all persons to whom services are provided that the documents required under this regulation are available on request.

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3. Service Animals, Guide Dogs and Support Persons

The College will ensure that the access, use and benefit of goods or services are not compromised for persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal, guide dog or support person.

3.1. Service animals and guide dogs will be permitted to enter and remain on College premises together with the person with disabilities.

*Exception: In a case where the service animal or guide dog is otherwise excluded by law the College will provide an alternative measure that enables access, use and benefit from College goods or services.

3.2. Support persons will be permitted to enter College premises together with the person with disabilities, and continuing access to the support person will be ensured.

3.3. If a support person is necessary for the health and safety of a person with disabilities, or for the health and safety of other persons, the College will require the accompaniment of a support person on College premises.

3.4. If there is an admission fee for a person to access to the College’s premises (e.g. to attend a College event), the College will provide advance notice of the amount of the admission fee, if any, that will be payable by the individual’s support person.

4. Temporary Disruption to Facilities or Services

If there is a temporary disruption in the facilities or services the College provides for persons with disabilities, the College will provide notice to the public of the reason, the expected duration and available alternatives if any. Notice may be by posting on campus or College websites or by other means reasonable in the circumstances.

5. Training

Every person who provides goods or services to the public or other third parties on behalf of the College, or who develops College policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to the public or other third parties will

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receive training about the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities. The training program will be consistent with the following:

5.1. Initial training will occur as soon as is practicable after a person is assigned to his or her duties.

5.2. Updated training will be provided as policies, practices and procedures related to the provision of services for persons with disabilities are changed.

5.3. Training will include:

a. A review of the purposes of the AODA and requirements of the Ontario Regulation 429/07.

b. Instruction on how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.

c. Instruction on how to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or who require the assistance of a service animal, guide dog or support person.

d. Instruction on how to use equipment or devices available at, or provided by, the College to assist with the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities.

e. Instruction on what to do if a person with disabilities is having difficulty accessing college services.

5.4. The College will maintain a record of the training provided.

6. Feedback Process

Consistent with the following principles, the College will establish a process for receiving and responding to feedback about services to persons with disabilities:

6.1. The process will permit feedback in person, by telephone, in writing or by electronic text using email or other digital means.

6.2. The process will specify actions the College will take on receipt of a complaint.

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6.3. Document(s) describing this process will be made available to any person on request.

Approved:

Fred Gibbons, President

Date:

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