



Accessibility Standard for Client and Participant Service

We are committed to complying with the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service under The Accessibility for Manitobans Act. Our policies, practices and measures reflect the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities.

If a barrier to accessing our goods or services cannot be removed, we seek to provide alternate ways to access the goods or services.

The following policy statements, organizational practices and measures are intended to meet the requirements of the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service.

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, students and management

1: Meet communication needs.

Policy Statement:

We aim to meet the communication needs of our clients and participants

Practices and Measures:

- To meet communication needs, when appropriate we offer to communicate in different ways, such as writing things down, reading things out loud, and taking extra time to explain things.
- We also
 - keep paper and pens available to write things down
 - offer a chair when longer conversations are needed
 - offer a quieter space
 - sit down to engage with someone using a wheelchair
 - arrange for interpreters when required
 - Use signs and documents that are easy to read, including using larger fonts and color contrast, and ensuring messages are not printed on images.
 - Write signs and documents in plain language.

2: Accommodate the use of assistive devices.

Policy Statement:

We accommodate the use of assistive devices when program participants or clients are accessing our services or facilities.

Practices and Measures:

- We do not touch or move others' assistive devices without permission.
- In cases where the assistive device presents significant and unavoidable health or safety concerns, we attempt to use other measures to ensure the person with disabilities can access our services

3: Welcome support persons.

Policy Statement:

We welcome support persons.

Practices and Measures:

- We address the service recipient or client, not the support person, unless requested by them to do otherwise.
- We make space for support persons on-site and ensure clients or program participants have access to their support persons at all times.

4: Allow service animals.

Policy Statement:

We allow service animals on our premises.

Practices and Measures:

- We:
 - treat a service animal as a working animal
 - do not distract a service animal from its job by petting, feeding or playing with it, unless given permission by the person with the service animal to do so
 - know how to identify a service animal by its harness or vest and by the assistance the animal is providing

- If we have concerns, we may ask if the animal has been trained to help a person with a disability-related need.
- We do not inquire about the disability.
- We expect the person who is handling the service animal to maintain control of the animal physically or through voice, signal or other means.
- If the service animal is showing signs of not being controlled (i.e., by barking, whining or wandering), we may provide a warning to the handler to control the animal.
- If the service animal continues to misbehave, we may ask the handler to leave.

5: Maintain accessibility features.

Policy Statement:

To ensure barrier-free access to our services or facilities, we maintain our accessibility features so they can be used as intended.

Practices and Measures:

- We organize our space so that there is room for people with wheelchairs, electric scooters and walkers.
- Our seating accommodates people of varying sizes and abilities.
- We keep hallways, aisles, entrance and reception areas, waiting rooms and meeting rooms clear of clutter.
- We keep our entrance area clear of ice and snow.
- We place standing signs out of the way to avoid tripping hazards.
- Our accessibility features affected by this policy include hallways, aisles, entrance and reception areas, waiting rooms and meeting rooms, accessible washrooms, elevators and automatic doors.

6. Let the public know when and why an accessibility feature is unavailable.

Policy Statement:

We let clients and/or program participants know when and why an accessibility feature is temporarily unavailable, how long it will be unavailable, and other ways to access our goods and services.

Practices and Measures:

- If one of our accessibility features becomes temporarily unavailable, we prepare and post a notice about the disruption, the reason for the disruption, how long it will last, and

whether there are other ways we can provide access to our goods and services (e.g., by using an alternate entrance).

- If requested, we work with our service recipients to find other ways to provide services.

7. Welcome and respond promptly to feedback.

Policy Statements:

We welcome and respond promptly to feedback we receive on the accessibility of our programs and services.

We document the actions we take to respond to the feedback we receive, and that information is available on request in a format that meets the individual's communication needs.

Practices and Measures:

- We invite feedback in the following ways:
 - Visit our reception, or contact us by phone or email
- All feedback is directed to the Executive Director who determines what action, if any, should occur.
- If the feedback requires us to follow-up, the service recipient is notified that the request is being reviewed and when they can expect a response.
- We let the service recipient know what action we will take to address their feedback, if any.
- We respond to feedback in a way that meets the communication needs of the individual.

8: Provide the required training to employees, volunteers and management.

Policy Statements:

We provide the required training on accessible client and participant service to employees, students, volunteers and management. We are trained on:

- How to interact and communicate with people who face barriers to accessing services, use assistive devices, are assisted by a support person and/or are assisted by a service animal.
- An overview of The Accessibility for Manitobans Act, The Human Rights Code (Manitoba), and the Customer Service Standard.
- Our organizational policies, practices and measures, including updates or changes.

Practices and Measures:

- We train new employees, volunteers, students and management during as part of orientation.
- Feedback on the accessibility of programs and services is addressed in regular staff meetings.

9: Keep a written record of accessibility and training policies

Policy Statements:

We keep a written record of our accessibility and training policies.

Our written documents include a summary of our training material and when training is offered.

We let the public know that our written policies are available on request.

Practices and Measures:

- We let the public know that our accessibility and training policies are available in the following ways:
 - posted on website
 - posted at our building entrance or service reception desk
- We provide our policies within a reasonable timeframe, at no cost, and in a format that meets the needs of the individual.

For more information contact:

Disabilities Issues Office (DIO)

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