

**THE CORPORATION OF THE VILLAGE
OF SOUTH RIVER**

Policy#2-2009

Being a Policy to define and explain, in Municipal context, Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O. Reg. 429/07 with compliance by January 1, 2010.

The Province of Ontario is moving toward an accessible Ontario by 2025. There are standards being developed or completed in five key areas of daily living which include:

- Customer Service
- Built Environment
- Employment
- Information and Communications
- Transportation

Accessibility Standards for Customer service Regulation (O. Reg. 429/07) is the first accessibility standard under the AODA. It came into force January 1, 2008 with compliance by January 1, 2010.

This municipality will try to ensure that it is accessible to a disabled person in the following ways:

- Develop a written policy on providing customer service to disabled individuals, including the use of assistive devices, communication, the use of service animals and special compensation for support persons to attend functions with the disabled individual
- Ensure these policies are consistent with principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity
- Staff training when possible
- Ensure any service interruption affecting a disabled individuals' ability to access services are clearly set out in advance, where possible.

Policy Content

Customer Service

Methods of providing Customer Service to a disabled person who presents themselves at a municipal service counter shall be:

- Additional time will be spent with the disabled person by either the designated counter person or a staff member who is called to assist
- Allowing the disabled person (if it is desired) to move into a more private location (office or board room) to provide an environment which allows the disabled person to complete his/her business away from the general public
- For hearing impaired written documents shall be provided as requested and assistance to complete the documents will be made available
- Picture/written word signage will indicate exits, washrooms and other services where possible

- For the sight impaired a staff member will read the documents and provide a written document of the meeting to be given to the support person of a disabled person (if desired)
- Information prompts regarding hours of operation and special instructions will be made available on the municipal answering machine
- For literacy challenged persons the staff will assist to the degree the individual requests
- In cases of extreme emergency the municipality will attempt to notify persons of the situation by a door-to-door campaign
- Handicapped parking will be designated at public municipal buildings
- Each individual situation will be dealt with independently and used as a learning tool to improve the municipality's future service to disabled persons.
- Communications regarding upgrades to all existing municipalities, including the accessibility policy, or concerns regarding customer service treatment which is beneath the standard of the municipality may be forwarded to the Clerk Administrator by written correspondence (in the form of letters or emails and faxes), by a request to appear at a Personnel Committee meeting, or by an agent reporting an incident on behalf of the injured party.
- All forms of communication will be kept confidential and will be acknowledged within one business week. The Clerk Administrator will investigate the matter and take the necessary action required and advise the individual how the matter has been resolved. As a small community council, staff and residents generally go out of their way to assist members of our community with disabilities.
- Existing municipal buildings, as upgrades are needed will ensure compliance to the Building Code regarding accessibility requirements.
- New municipal buildings will be constructed in compliance with the Building Code regarding accessibility requirements.
- As technology advances and funding is available additional means of providing accessibility to residents and visitors to our community will be considered.
- At present, notifications to the public may include radio announcements, posters throughout the community, door-to-door notifications, website notices, and messages on the municipal answering machine or a combination of any or all of the above.

Staff Training

Staff training and discussions will be included in the annual harassment training and violence in the workplace training. Training and discussions will center around methods which will ensure the right to privacy, the right to being treated with dignity, and the right to have the customers concerns dealt with in a professional way.