

Feedback

The Town of Fort Frances welcomes any comments on the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities.

Accessibility Working Group

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Resources

AccessON: for videos, posters, legislation
www.AccessON.ca
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities:
www.mcscs.gov.on.ca/mcscs/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario

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How may I help you?



The Corporation of the
Town of Fort Frances

Understanding Accessible Customer Service



How may I help you?

Background

Ontario has an important law called the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* - this is the first of its kind in Canada. It's predecessor, *The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)*, was introduced to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to their full participation in life in the Province. To this end, the ODA mandated that each municipality prepare an annual Accessibility Plan. Ours is available on the Town's website (www.fort-frances.com)

People with disabilities should have the same kind of opportunities as everyone else. They should be able to do the things that most of us take for granted like going to work or school, shopping, taking in a movie or eating out at a restaurant.

That's the goal of Ontario's Legislation. Businesses and organizations who provide goods and services to people in Ontario will be required to meet certain accessibility standards in five important areas of our lives. These include:

1. Customer service
2. Transportation
3. Information and communications
4. Built environment
5. Employment

Accessible Customer Service

CUSTOMER SERVICE	
Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good	<input type="checkbox"/>
Average	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>

Accessible customer service can mean many things. Mostly, it is the understanding that each individual may need a different type of accommodation.

Accessible Customer Service follows four basic principles:

1. Dignity
2. Independence
3. Integration
4. Equal Opportunity

For example, a person who is blind may need to have information read aloud to them; an individual with a learning disability may need to have instructions written down; someone who uses a wheelchair may need help in finding a route they can use; and there may be customers that have difficulty reading or writing.



Assistive Devices at Town Facilities

Fort Frances Library Technology Centre

Kurzweil 1000 V. 12 Software (scanning, reading & writing Software for the blind or visually impaired)

ZoomText V. 9.1 Magnifier/Reader

Dolphin Guide V. 5 (Simple Menu, making computer easier for seniors or visually impaired)

JAWS Professional V. 11 (Screen Reader)

Epson Perfection 4490 Photo Scanner

Freedom Scientific Ruby (Hand held magnifier)

Freedom Scientific SARA/Scanning & Reading Appliance

Freedom Scientific Topaz (CCTV) with 22” LCD Monitor (Magnifier)

Zoomtext Keyboards (Black on Yellow)

Visikey Large Print Keyboard (White on Black)

Height Adjustable Table

Conference Mic and Ear Amplifier



Mobility

Portable Aquatic Lift

A portable aquatic lift is available at the Memorial Sports Centre pool.



Service Animals

Service animals are welcome at all Town of Fort Frances facilities.

Support Persons

One-Person-One-Fare Policy

The Corporation of The Town of Fort Frances Accessible Customer Service Standard Policy

The Town of Fort Frances shall use reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles;

- The goods or services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- The provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities, and others, will be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services.
- Persons with disabilities will be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods or services.
- Persons with disabilities may use assistive devices and/or support persons in the access of goods and services.
- Town of Fort Frances employees when communicating with a person with a disability shall do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

Disruption of Services

From time to time there may be disruptions in service, such as repairs, renovations that limit access to an area, or technology that may be temporarily unavailable.

People with disabilities may often go to a lot of trouble to access services, such as arranging for transportation. By providing notice, you can save that person an unnecessary trip.

If a disruption in service is planned and expected, it is important to provide reasonable notice. Notice can be provided on the Town's website, posters at Town facilities, or through the local media. In the event of an unexpected disruption in service, notice will be provided in a variety of ways and as quickly as possible.

How May I Help You?

People with disabilities are generally aware they may need some accommodations and will work with you. Just remember to ask how you can help.

Always start with people first. In language, that means saying, "person with a disability", rather than "a disabled person". In any interaction, it means addressing the person's service needs, rather than focusing on the disability.

Disabilities are not always visible or easy to distinguish. Following are a few examples of guidelines you can use to provide service to customers with disabilities.

A person who is Deaf, deafened or hard of hearing: Attract customer's attention before speaking by a touch on shoulder or a wave of your hand; look directly at person when speaking.



A person with a visual disability:



Don't assume the customer can't see you at all; speak directly to the customer; offer your elbow to guide; if they accept, walk slowly, wait for permission; identify landmarks; be precise and descriptive with information; do not leave the customer; if the customer has a guide dog, do not touch or talk to the dog.

A person with a mental health disability:

Treat the customer with the same level of dignity, respect and consideration as anyone else; take the customer seriously; be confident and reassuring; if the customer is in crisis, ask how best to help.



A person with a learning disability:

Take your time, be patient; demonstrate a willingness to assist; speak normally, clearly and directly to the customer; provide information in a way that works for the customer (i.e., use a pen and paper).

Some people may be nervous when serving a customer with a disability. It is very important