

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LAVALLEE

ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY

1. Purpose/Application:

The purpose of this Policy is to recognize the Township's obligation to facilitate the implementation of the *Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA), and regulations pursuant to the *Act*.

The policies are consistent with the principals of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity.

The policies identify that when communicating with the person with a disability, The Corporation of the Township of La Vallee takes into account the person's disability.

2. Implementation:

The Township of La Vallee will provide goods and services to people with disabilities, with particular consideration to the following areas:

(a) *Guide Dogs, Service Animals:*

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal, the Township will permit the person to enter municipal premises with the animal and keep it with him or her, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises. If the service animal or guide dog is excluded by law from the premises, the Township will look to other available measure to enable the person with the disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Township's goods or services. Currently, guide dogs or service animals would be excluded only from the kitchen area of our community centre as per Health Unit regulations. As the kitchen connects to the main hall, a person could have the service animal near the kitchen but not in the kitchen.

(b) *Support Persons:*

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, they are permitted to enter the premises together and are not prevented from having access to each other while on the premises. The Township may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on its premises, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or to protect the health or safety of others on the premises. This is done after consulting with the individual. Where fees for goods and services are advertised or promoted by the Township, it will provide advance notice of the amount payable, if any, and waive the fee in respect of the support person.

(c) *Disruption of Services:*

If there is a temporary disruption in a particular facility or service used to allow a person with a disability to access goods or services, the Township will give notice of the disruption to the public. The notice will be posted on the Township's website www.lavallee.ca as well as at the Township Office. The notice will include the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available.

(d) *Feedback Process:*

The Township will use the form attached as Schedule "A" hereto to allow the public to provide feedback on the accessibility of the provision of goods and services. We will make every effort to make this feedback process accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for provision of accessible formats and communication supports, upon request. This form is also available on the Township's website at www.lavallee.ca and at the Township office. Feedback on how services are delivered to individuals with disabilities shall be invited, forwarded to the appropriate personnel, responded to, documented and tracked. Feedback can be provided in multiple formats including in person, by mail, phone, email and TTY.

(e) *Assistive Devices:*

If a person with a disability requires assistive devices to access goods or services of the Township, they are allowed to use such devices.

(f) *Training:*

The Township will provide training to all Township employees and volunteers who are expected to deal with the public as part of their municipal responsibilities, including those persons involved in the development and approval of customer services policies, practices, and procedures. All such persons will receive Accessibility Awareness Training via the Serve-Ability online training provided by the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario as soon as practical after beginning their employment or after being appointed.

This training shall include:

- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability.
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person (office staff only).
- How to use equipment or devices if any are available on the provider's premises or otherwise provided by the provider that may help with the provision of goods, services, or facilities to a person with a disability. Currently, the Township does not have any equipment or devices.
- What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the provider's goods, services, or facilities.

The Township will provide ongoing training with respect to changes in its policies, practices and procedures to those individuals who require such training.

The Township will keep records of the training provided.

The Township will provide training documents upon request to persons to whom the Township provides goods, services or facilities subject to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Agents and contractors working on various projects for the municipality and who have been approved by successful tender shall be responsible for providing their own training to meet the requirements of Ontario Regulation #429/07.

3. Exclusion:

This Accessibility Customer Service Policy shall not apply during any period where the Reeve, or the Reeve's designate, has declared a state of emergency as defined under *the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*.

4. Availability:

Individuals can request a copy of this policy via email at lavalley@nwonet.net, by fax at (807) 486-3863, or by phone at (807) 486-3452. The policy is also available online at www.lavallee.ca or can be obtained at the Municipal Office at 56 Church Road, Devlin, Ontario P0W 1C0.

ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE FEEDBACK FORM

Regarding provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities

Thank you for visiting the Township of La Vallee. We value all of our customers and strive to meet everyone's needs.

Please tell us the date and time of your visit: _____

Staff Member, Department or Service Location you visited: _____

Did we respond to your customer service needs today?

YES

NO

Was our customer service provided to you in an accessible manner?

YES

SOMEWHAT – Please explain: _____

NO – Please explain: _____

Did you have any problems accessing our goods and services?

YES -- Please explain: _____

SOMEWHAT – Please explain: _____

NO

Please add any other comments you may have: _____

Contact information (optional): _____