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<b>HR Guideline: AODA Accessible Customer Service</b>	<b>Guideline #: 30</b>
<b>Effective Date:</b> June 1, 2023	<b>Approved by:</b>  <hr/> <b>George Zegarac, CEO</b>

## **Guideline**

This guideline is to ensure Waterfront Toronto prescribes to the requirements of the Customer Service Standards of the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11. This guideline governs the provision of goods, services and facilities provided to the public or other third parties, not to the goods, services or facilities themselves.

Waterfront Toronto is committed to providing accessible goods, services and facilities to all individuals including employees, customers and people with disabilities. Waterfront Toronto's goods, services and facilities will be provided in a manner that is based upon the following principles:

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

The provision of goods, services and facilities to persons with disabilities will be integrated where applicable. Waterfront Toronto will strive to ensure that persons with disabilities will be given the opportunities equal to that provided to others, specifically the use and benefits from the goods, services or facilities Waterfront Toronto provides.

## **Purpose and Scope**

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* ("**AODA**") is Provincial Legislation with the purpose of developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for persons with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025.

This guideline is in accordance with the Customer Service Standards of the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 and will address the following:

## Customer Service

- The provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities
- The use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities.
- The use of service animals, guide dogs and support persons by persons with disabilities.
- Notice of temporary disruptions in services and facilities
- Training
- Customer feedback regarding the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities
- Notice of availability and format of documents

This guideline is applicable to all staff, including those employed on a full-time, part-time or on a contract basis with Waterfront Toronto, and all other members of the Waterfront Toronto organization.

## **Definitions**

**Accessible** shall mean capable of being entered or reached, approachable; easy to get at; capable of being influenced, obtainable; able to be understood or appreciated.

**Assistive Device** shall mean a device used to assist persons with disabilities in carrying out activities or in accessing the goods, services or facilities of persons or organizations covered by the Customer Service Standards.

**Dignity** shall mean respecting and treating every person including persons with a disability as valued and as deserving of effective and full service as any other customer.

**Disability** shall mean,

- 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 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*;

**Independence** shall mean freedom from control or influence of others, freedom to make your own choices.

**Guide Dog** shall mean a guide dog as defined in Section 1 of the *Blind Persons' Rights Act*.

**Goods, Services and Facilities** shall mean the goods, services and facilities, as the case may be, provided by Waterfront Toronto.

**Service Animals** shall mean animals that are used as a service animal for a person with a disability.

**Support Person** shall mean, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods, services or facilities.

## **Customer Service Standards**

Waterfront Toronto is committed to excellence in serving all customers, including people with disabilities.

### **Assistive Devices**

Persons with disabilities may use their assistive devices as required in accessing goods and/or services and/or facilities provided by Waterfront Toronto.

Currently, Waterfront Toronto does not have assistive devices on the premises for the use of people with disabilities. In the event of a need for a particular device, the necessary arrangements would be made to the extent possible. If ever applicable, Waterfront Toronto will ensure that all staff and other prescribed persons are trained and familiar with various assistive devices available on site that are provided that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods, services or facilities.

### **Communication**

Waterfront Toronto and its members will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

### **Service Animals and Guide Dogs**

Waterfront Toronto is committed to ensuring all service animals and guide dogs accompanying persons with a disability are permitted on Waterfront Toronto premises, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law. Where a service animal is excluded by law from the premises, Waterfront Toronto will ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from our goods, services or facilities.

### **Support Persons**

Waterfront Toronto is committed to ensuring all support persons accompanying a person with a disability are welcome into our offices and to ensuring that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to them at all times.

When required by a person with a disability, Waterfront Toronto will permit the person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on our premises.

Waterfront Toronto may also require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on our premises if, after consulting with the person with a disability and considering the available evidence, Waterfront Toronto determines that a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises and there is no other reasonable way.

If there is a fee to enter the premises, or in connection with a person's presence at our premises, Waterfront Toronto will provide notice of the fees including those for support persons. Such notice will be posted and available in advance. If Waterfront Toronto requires a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person, any access fee for such support person will be waived.

### Notice of Disruptions

Disruptions to facilities or services may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of Waterfront Toronto. In the event of any planned or unexpected, temporary disruptions to facilities or services that customers with disabilities rely on to access or use Waterfront Toronto's goods, services or facilities, reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice. In some circumstances, such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruptions, advance notice will be provided as promptly as possible.

All posted notices will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notice will be given as appropriate and may include posting the notice at our premises, on our website, or other method as is reasonable in the circumstances.

### Training

Waterfront Toronto will provide training to all employees and volunteers, those involved in the development of Waterfront Toronto's guidelines and those who provide goods, services or facilities on Waterfront Toronto's behalf. This training will also be provided as soon as practicable to new employees and volunteers once employed at, or engaged by, Waterfront Toronto.

Training will include:

- An overview of the AODA and the requirements of the customer service standards.

- An overview of Waterfront Toronto's guidelines on providing accessible customer service.
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Waterfront Toronto's goods, services or facilities.

Revised training will be provided in the event of changes to legislation, procedures, or practices.

Records of such training will be maintained including the number of people and date on which training is provided.

### Feedback Process

Anyone who wishes to provide feedback on the way Waterfront Toronto provides goods, services or facilities to people with disabilities, or about Waterfront Toronto's feedback process, can provide feedback in person, via e-mail, or by contacting us via telephone. Feedback and complaints will be forwarded to Waterfront Toronto's VP of Human Resources and Administration and will be addressed accordingly.

### Notice of Availability and Format of Documents

Documents related to the Customer Service Standards will be posted at the Waterfront Toronto offices and will be posted online at ([www.waterfronttoronto.ca](http://www.waterfronttoronto.ca)).

These documents are also available upon request and are available in a format that takes into account the person's disability or with communication supports, after having consulted with the person making the request. Waterfront Toronto will provide an accessible format in a timely manner and at no additional cost.

## **Modifications and Questions**

Any guideline of Waterfront Toronto's that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

If anyone has a question about this guideline, or if the purpose of this guideline is not understood, an explanation will be provided by Waterfront Toronto's VP of Human Resources and Administration, Rose Desrochers [rdesrochers@waterfronttoronto.ca](mailto:rdesrochers@waterfronttoronto.ca).