

THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF NEEBING
ACCESSIBILITY: CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD POLICY

Date approved: December 18, 2024

Review Cycle:

This policy will be reviewed on an as needed basis. The Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five years.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005 provides for the establishment of accessibility standards. Accordingly, Ontario Regulation 429/07, Accessible Standards for Customer Service, was enacted. Under this Regulation municipalities must establish policies, procedures and practices governing the provision of its goods or services to persons with disabilities. In addition, the Municipality must use all reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, procedures and practices provide accessible customer services to people with various kinds of disabilities and that the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity, as defined herein, are respected.

The purpose of this Policy is to fulfil the Requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (S.O. 2005, c. 11, as amended) and regulations passed pursuant to the Act. Further, implementation of this Policy will assist the Province in making Ontario an accessible province for all Ontarians.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the provision of goods and services at premises leased, owned and operated by the Municipality of Neebing. It applies to employees, agents and/or contractors who deal with the public or other third parties that act on behalf of the

The section of this policy that addresses the use of guide dogs, service animals and service dogs only applies to the provision of goods and services that take place at premises owned and operated by the Municipality of Neebing.

DEFINITIONS:

“Agents” means a person or business providing goods or services on behalf of the Municipality of Trent Lakes through a contract or agreement.

“Assistive Device” is a technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that members of the Public, or other Stakeholders bring with them such as a wheelchair, walker or a personal oxygen tank that might assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering

and/or reading.

“Barrier” shall mean anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of the disability. Barriers may include a physical, architectural or attitudinal barrier as well as, an information or communication barrier, technological barriers, a policy, procedure or a practice.

“Customer Service Representative” An employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise who, on behalf of the Municipality of Trent Lakes, provides or oversees the provision of Municipal goods or services to members of the public or other third parties.

“Disability” the term disability as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and the Ontario Human Rights Code, refers to: 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; a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability; a learning disability, or dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language; a mental disorder; or an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

“Guide Dog” is a highly-trained working dog that has been trained at one of the facilities listed in Ontario Regulation 58 under the Blind Persons’ Rights Act, to provide mobility, safety and increased independence for people who are blind.

“Service Animal” as reflected in Ontario Regulation 429/07, an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if: it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

“Service Dog” as reflected in Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562 a dog other than a guide dog for the blind is a service dog if: it is readily apparent to an average person that the dog functions as a service dog for a person with a medical disability; or the person who requires the dog can provide on request a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires a service dog.

Support Person” as reflected in Ontario Regulation 429/07, a support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies them in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to goods and services.

POLICY

The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities

The Municipality of Neebing will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity:

- Ensuring that all members of the Public, or other Stakeholders with disabilities, receive the same value and quality;
- Allowing members of the Public, or other Stakeholders with disabilities, to do things in their own ways, and at their own pace, when accessing goods and services (as long as this does not present a safety risk);
- Using alternative methods when possible to ensure that members of the Public, or other Stakeholders with disabilities, have access to the same services, in the same place and in a similar manner;
- Taking into account individual needs when providing goods and services; and
- Communicating in a manner that takes into account members of the Public, or other Stakeholder's disability.

Assistive Devices

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing goods or services provided by the Municipality of Neebing.

In cases where the assistive device presents a safety concern or where accessibility might be an issue, other reasonable measures will be used to ensure the access of goods and services. For example, open flames and oxygen tanks cannot be near one another. Therefore, the accommodation of a customer with an oxygen tank may involve ensuring the person is in a location that would be considered safe for both the members of the Public, or other Stakeholders. Or, where an individual requires assistive devices for the purposes of mobility, service will be provided in a location that meets the needs of the members of the Public, or other Stakeholders.

Guide Dogs, Service Animals and Service Dogs

A visitor with a disability that is accompanied by a guide dog, service animal or service dog will be allowed access to premises that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law. "No pet" policies do not apply to guide dogs, service animals and/or service dogs. If the service animal is excluded by law from the facility, the Municipality will make every effort to ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Municipality's goods and services.

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used by the members of the Public, or other Stakeholders for reasons relating to his or her disability, the Municipality of Neebing may request verification. Verification may include:

- A letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the

- animal for reasons related to the disability;
- A valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada; or
- A certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school.

If a health and safety concern presents itself, for example in the form of a severe allergy to the animal, the Municipality of Neebing will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals.

Support Persons

If a member of the Public, or other Stakeholders with a disability, is accompanied by a support person, the Municipality of Neebing will ensure that both persons are allowed to enter the premises together and that such a person is not prevented from having access to their support person. In the event that admission fees are charged, advanced notice concerning what admission, if any, would be charged to a support person shall be posted in a conspicuous place.

There may be times where seating and availability prevent a disabled person and a support person from sitting beside each other. In these situations, the Municipality of Neebing will make every reasonable attempt to resolve the issue. In situations where confidential information might be discussed, consent will be obtained from the member of the Public, or other Stakeholder, prior to any conversation where confidential information might be discussed.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

Service disruptions may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of the Municipality of Trent Lakes. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services, reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice. In some circumstances such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruptions, advance notice may not be possible.

Notifications: In the event that a notification needs to be posted the following information will be included unless it is not readily available or known:

- Goods or services that are disrupted or unavailable;
- Reason for the disruption;
- Anticipated duration;
- A description of alternative services or options; and
- Contact information.

Feedback Process

The Municipality of Neebing shall provide members of the Public, or other Stakeholders with disabilities, with the opportunity to provide feedback on the service provided to them. The Municipality will upon request provide a copy of its policies, practices and procedures (any applicable photocopy charges will be applied).

Information about the feedback process will be readily available to all members of the Public and notice of the process will be made. A feedback link is available on the Neebing website and feedback forms along with alternate methods of providing feedback such as verbally (in person or by telephone) or written (hand-written, delivered, website or email), will be available upon request.

Submitting Feedback

Members of the Public, or other Stakeholders who wish to provide feedback on the way the Municipality of Neebing provides goods and services to people with disabilities can use the Feedback form on the website, contact us verbally, send an email, send mail or phone us. You can expect to hear back from the Municipality within five (5) business days. All feedback, including concerns or complaints, may be directed to:

Municipality of Neebing, 4766 Highway 61 Neebing, ON P7L 0B5

Phone: 807 474-5331, Email: Neebing@neebing.org

Appendix A

Accessible Customer Service Plan: Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities

The Municipality of Neebing is committed to excellence in serving all members of the public including people with disabilities.

Assistive devices

Members of the public with disabilities are welcome to use their own assistive devices while accessing our goods or services.

Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

Service animals

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public.

Support persons

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises at no charge. We will notify clients of this through a notice posted on our premises and webpage.

Notice of temporary disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for members of the public with disabilities, the Municipality of Neebing will notify the public. This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Service disruption notices will be placed on the Neebing website and/or notice will be placed on the entrance door of the Municipal Office, or at the site the service is available.

Training

The Municipality of Neebing will provide training to employees, and others who deal with the public or other third parties on our behalf. Every individual in the organization will be trained, including management. Training will be provided to staff within the first three months of hire.

Training will include:

- An overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard;
- The Municipality of Neebing policy related to the customer service standard;
- 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 accessing the Municipality of Neebing goods and services.

** Staff will also be trained when/if changes are made to the plan.

Feedback Process

Visitors or other members of the public who wish to provide feedback on the way we provide goods and services to people with disabilities are welcome to contact the Municipality of Neebing and can expect to receive a response within five (5) business days.

All feedback, including concerns or complaints, may be directed to:

Municipality of Neebing: 4766 Highway 61, Neebing, ON P7L 0B5,

Phone: 807 474-5331, Email Neebing@Neebing.org

Modifications to this or other policies

Any policy of the Municipality of Neebing that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed to ensure our commitment to these principles.