



Jeffery's Greenhouses

Accessibility Standard For Customer Service Training

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

- Law in Ontario that allows the gov't to develop specific standards of accessibility and to enforce them
- Why? To achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025
- Identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities in key areas of daily living
- The customer service standard is the first to come into effect
- Other standards in the area of transportation, information/communications, the built environment and employment are coming

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

Who are people with disabilities?

- Same definition as the Ontario Human Rights Code

Disability means:

- Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation/disfigurement caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness
- A condition of mental impairment or developmental disability
- A learning disability or dysfunction in one or more of the processes in understanding or using symbols or spoken language
- A mental disorder, or
- An injury/disability for which benefits are claimed under the WSIB Act

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

What are barriers?

Anything that keeps someone from a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society, such as:

- Architectural or structural barriers (building design)
- Communicational barriers (for hearing/sight impaired)
- Technology or lack of (computers, phone aids etc.)
- Systemic barriers (organizations policies or procedures)
- Attitude (the way people think or behave towards persons with disabilities)

The Customer Service Standard

What is the Customer Service Standard?

- It is now law and came into force on January 1, 2008 for public (governmental) and non-profit organizations and on January 1, 2012 for private sector
- It is aimed at making customer service operations of businesses and other organizations accessible to people with disabilities

The Customer Service Standard

Who has to comply with the Customer Service Standard?

The Standard applies to all people or organizations, both public and private, that:

- Provide goods and services either directly to the public or to other businesses or organizations, and
- Have one or more employees in Ontario

(Private, Non-profit, and public sectors including provincial and municipal government, universities/colleges, hospitals, school boards and public transit)

The Customer Service Standard

What do all providers have to do to comply?

Providers must:

- Establish policies, procedures and practices on providing goods or services to people with disabilities and make reasonable efforts to ensure that they are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity
- Develop policy dealing with people's use of their own assistive devices
- Communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account their disability

The Customer Service Standard

What do all providers have to do to comply?

Providers must (Continued):

- Allow persons with disabilities to bring their service animals or support persons onto parts of the premises open to the public or other third parties
- If a provider charges admission, let people know ahead of time what, if any admission will be charged
- Provide notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities usually use are temporarily disrupted
- Train anyone who interacts with the public or other third parties on the provider's behalf on the topics covered in the customer service standard

The Customer Service Standard

What do all providers have to do to comply?

Providers must (Continued):

- Train anyone who is involved in developing the provider's customer service policies, practices and procedures on topics outlined in the customer service standard
- Establish a process for receiving and responding to feedback about the way the organization provides goods or services to people with disabilities, including the actions to be taken if a complaint is received

The Customer Service Standard

What do all providers have to do to comply?

Providers must (Continued):

If the private sector provider has 20 or more employees they must also

- Document in writing all their policies, practices and procedures
- Let customers know that the documents are available upon request
- Upon request, provide the documented information to a person with a disability in a format that takes into account their disability

General Tips on Providing Service to Customers with Disabilities

- If you are not sure what to do, ask your customer “May I help you?”
- Speak directly to the person with a disability, not his /her support person
- Make no assumptions about what type of disability the person has – some disabilities aren’t visible and customers aren’t required to give information about their disability
- Be patient – it may take a person with disabilities a little longer to understand and respond. Listen carefully

General Tips on Providing Service to Customers with Disabilities

- Use appropriate language and terminology when referring to people with disabilities (use the word “disability” not “disabled” or “handicap” or “handicapped”)
- Don’t use terms such as “retarded”, “dumb”, “psycho” etc.
- Put people first. It is proper to say “person with a disability” rather than “disabled person”
- If you cannot understand what the customer is saying, politely ask them to repeat themselves
- Don’t touch or speak to service animals – they are working and have to pay attention at all times
- Don’t touch assistive devices, including wheelchairs, without permission

General Tips on Providing Service to Customers with Vision Loss

- Don't assume the individual can't see you (few people with vision loss are totally blind)
- Don't touch the customer without asking permission
- Offer your elbow to guide the person. If he/she accepts, walk slowly, but wait for permission before doing so. Lead – don't pull. Announce handrails, doors (to the right/left, push/pull to open etc.)
- Stairs – let the customer know if they have to walk up/down, approach head on and come to a full stop in front of the stairs, lead them to the rail side to allow them to take hold of it, let them find the first step and then start to climb/descend, try to be one step ahead and announce the last step

General Tips on Providing Service to Customers with Vision Loss

- If you are going through a narrow passage, go first, after explaining the circumstances and describing the area
- Upon entering a room/area, describe the dimensions and the location and people and furniture
- Don't touch or speak to service animals – they are working
- Don't leave your customer in the middle of a room – show him/her to a chair or comfortable location
- If you need to leave your customer, let them know that you will be back
- Identify yourself when you approach your customer and speak directly to him/her, even if they have a companion support person

General Tips on Providing Service to Customers with Vision Loss

- Be clear and concise when giving directions (two steps behind you, to your left one foot , etc.) – don't say "over there" or point
- If you are uncertain about how to provide directions, ask the person how to do so
- Don't be afraid or embarrassed to use the words "see", "read", and "look". They use these words also.
- When providing printed information (not in Braille) offer to read or summarize it
- Offer to describe information (verbally itemized the bill or explain the care-tag, etc.)

General Tips on Providing Service to Customers with Vision Loss

Types of assistance your customer might use:

- Braille
- Large print
- Magnification devices
- White cane
- Guide Dog
- Support person

General Tips on Providing Service to Customers who are Deaf, Oral Deaf, Deafened or Hard of Hearing

People who have hearing loss may be Deaf, oral deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing.

- A Deaf person(indicated by a capital "D") is a person who has severe to profound hearing loss (little or no hearing)
- Oral deaf is a term describing a person born deaf or who became deaf before learning to speak, but is taught to speak and may not use American Sign Language
- "Deafened" describes a person who lost their hearing slowly or suddenly in adulthood. The person may use speech with visual cues such as captioning, speechreading or sign language.
- "Hard of hearing" describes a person who uses their residual hearing and speech to communicate (may use speechreading, hearing aids, sign language and/or communication devices)

General Tips on Providing Service to Customers who are Deaf, Oral Deaf, Deafened or Hard of Hearing

- Attract the customer's attention before speaking (gentle touch on the shoulder or gentle wave of hand)
- Ask how you can help – don't shout
- Move to a well lit area so the customer can see your face
- Don't put your hands in front of your face when speaking
- Ask if another method of communicating would be easier, for example using a pen and paper

General Tips on Providing Service to Customers who are Deaf, Oral Deaf, Deafened or Hard of Hearing

- Be clear and precise when giving directions and repeat if necessary. Confirm the customer understands you.
- If the person is wearing hearing aids, reduce background noise or move to a quieter area.
- Don't assume that the customer knows sign language or reads lips.
- Address your customer, not the interpreter or support person

General Tips on Providing Service to Customers who are Deaf, Oral Deaf, Deafened or Hard of Hearing

Types of assistance your customer might use:

- Hearing aids
- Paper and pen
- Personal amplification device ("pocket talker")
- Phone amplifier
- Teletypewriter
- Hearing ear dog
- Support person who interprets sign language

General Tips on Interacting with Customers who have Physical Disabilities

There are many types and degrees of physical disabilities, and not all require a wheelchair. People with arthritis, heart or lung conditions or amputations may also have difficulty with moving, standing, lifting or sitting.

- Speak naturally and directly to your customer
- If you need to have a lengthy conversation with someone in a wheelchair /scooter, consider sitting so that you can make eye contact
- Ask before you help. People with physical disabilities often have their own way of doing things.

General Tips on Interacting with Customers who have Physical Disabilities

- Respect your customers personal space. Don't lean on the assistive device
- Don't move their assistive devices (canes, walkers, etc.) out of their reach.
- Let your customer know about accessible features in the immediate area (auto doors, washrooms, ramps, etc.)
- Don't touch assistive devices without permission. If you have permission to move a person in a wheelchair remember to
 - ü Wait for their instructions
 - ü Confirm they are ready to move
 - ü Describe what you are going to do before doing it
 - ü Avoid uneven ground/objects
 - ü Don't leave the person in an awkward/undignified position (facing a wall or in the path of open doors)

General Tips on Interacting with Customers who have Physical Disabilities

Types of assistance your customer might use:

- Elevator
- Mobility device (wheelchair, scooter, walker, cane, crutches)
- Support person

General Tips on Interacting with Customers who have Mental Health Disabilities

These disabilities are not as visible as other types. You may not know unless you are informed. A person with mental health disabilities may have difficulty with one or more of these:

- Inability to think clearly
- Hallucinations (hearing , seeing or feeling things not there)
- Depression or acute mood swings
- Poor concentration
- Difficulty remembering
- Lack of motivation

General Tips on Interacting with Customers who have Mental Health Disabilities

- Treat a person with a mental health disability with the same respect and consideration you have for everyone else
- Be patient
- Be confident and reassuring. Listen carefully to try to meet their needs.
- If they appear to be in crisis, ask him or her to tell you the best way to help.

General Tips on Interacting with Customers who have Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities

These people may have difficulty doing many things most of us take for granted and can range from mild to profound.

- Don't assume what a person can or can't do
- Use plain language and speak in short sentences
- Confirm if your customer understands by asking them to repeat the message back to you
- If you can't understand what is being said, simply ask again
- Provide one piece of information at a time
- Treat with same dignity and respect

General Tips on Interacting with Customers who have Speech or Language Impairments

Some people have problems communicating because of their disability. Cerebral palsy, hearing loss and other conditions make it difficult to pronounce words or may cause slurring/stuttering.

- Don't assume that because a person has one disability, they also have another (difficulty speaking doesn't also mean they have an intellectual disability)
- Ask your customer to repeat the information if you don't understand
- Ask questions that can be answered "yes" or "no"

General Tips on Interacting with Customers who have Speech or Language Impairments

- Allow enough time to communicate with your customer as they may speak more slowly
- Don't interrupt or finish your customer's sentences. Wait for them to finish.

Types of assistance your customer might use:

- Communication board
- Paper and pen
- Speech generating device
- Support person

Accessibility Standard for Customer Service

- Review the Home Depot Canada Accessibility Standard with your merchandising representatives and the “Training Tips for Employees”, complete the test
- Ensure you know where assistive devices (wheelchairs, scooters, ramps, etc.) are located in the store or who they should contact in the store for assistance
- Jeffery’s Greenhouses Policy will be posted on the website and applies in our dealings with our customers located on our premises