

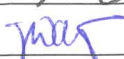
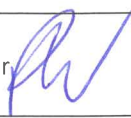


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|  | Document Type: POLICY   | Document No.: AODA-POL-02  |
|   | TITLE:<br>AODA – CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY  | Revision No.: 2.0  |
| APPLICABLE TO   | ALL STAFF   | Date Created: Feb/01/2016  |
| Reviewed by:<br>(JHSC Committee)  | Worker Rep: Steve Stoer <br>Employer Rep: Frederick Oplado  | Approved by:<br>President: Peter Weber  |

**1. Purpose and Background**

Under the AODA, Ontario Regulation 429/07, entitled "Accessibility Standards for Customer Service" (the "Service Regulation"), came into effect on January 1, 2008. The Service Regulation establishes accessibility standards specific to customer service for private sector organizations that provide goods and services to members of the public or other third parties.

The objective of this policy is to identify what the equal treatment provisions of the Ontario Human Rights Code, through the AODA and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), require with respect to service delivery to persons with disabilities and addresses the following:

- the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities;
- the use of assistive devices;
- the use of guide dogs and service animals;
- the use of support persons;
- notice of service disruptions;
- customer feedback;
- training; and
- notice of availability and format of required documents.

**2. Statement of Commitment and Accountabilities**

WSI / King is committed to providing a respectful, welcoming, accessible, and inclusive environment in the provision of goods and services for both customers/clients and employees alike. WSI / King is committed to, and strives to ensure that, the AODA, the standards and all other relevant legislation concerning accessibility, are rigorously observed. WSI / King ensures that all persons within its community are aware of their rights and responsibilities to foster an accessible and inclusive environment with and for persons with disabilities.

People with disabilities will be given an equal opportunity to obtain, use and benefit from WSI / King's products and services in a way that is respectful of the dignity and independence of people with disabilities and in a manner which takes into account the person's disability.

All goods and services provided by WSI / King shall follow the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

**Dignity:** The principle of respecting the dignity of a person with a disability means treating them as customers and clients who are as valued and as deserving of high quality and timely service as any other customer. Persons with disabilities are not treated as an afterthought or forced to accept

lesser service, quality or convenience. The delivery of goods and services must take into account how persons with disabilities can effectively access and use them.

**Independence:** In some instances, independence means freedom from control or influence of others -- freedom to make one's own choices. In other situations, it may mean the freedom to do things in one's own way. People who may move or speak more slowly or differently must not be denied an opportunity to participate in a program or service because of this. Staff must allow persons with disabilities to take the time they need, without rushing them or taking over a task for them if someone prefers to do it themselves in their own way.

**Integration:** The provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities and others must be integrated to allow persons with disabilities to fully benefit from the same services, in the same place and in the same or similar way as other customers. Integration means that policies, programs and services including practices and procedures are designed to be accessible to everyone, including persons with disabilities.

**Equal Opportunity:** Equal opportunity means having the same chances, options, benefits and results as others. In the case of services it means that persons with disabilities have the same opportunity as others to obtain, use and benefit from the way goods or services are provided. They should not have to make significantly more effort to access or obtain services. They should also not have to accept lesser quality or more inconvenience.

WSI / King is committed to becoming a barrier-free environment and meeting the requirements of all existing legislation and its own policies and goals related to identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to people with disabilities that might interfere with their ability to make full use of the services provided by WSI / King.

### **3. Accountabilities and Responsibilities**

3.1 WSI / King President is accountable to and responsible for:

- the governance of this policy
- corporate liability for compliance with legislative requirements, including fiscal responsibility, human costs and human rights issues
- support and promote the policy in their area of direct report and throughout the organization
- drive the culture to a high level of understanding regarding disability and accommodation
- supporting and educating managers in their obligations
- providing education to all employees in AODA requirements

3.2 WSI / King Managers are accountable to and responsible for:

- fostering open and constructive communication
- demonstrating sensitivity to and respect confidentiality of information
- raising awareness to facilitate understanding of the policy
- participating and co-operating to facilitate workplace accommodation
- acting as a resource for all parties and participants

3.3 WSI / King Employees are accountable to and responsible for:

- participating and cooperating with all parties to facilitate workplace accommodation

#### 4. Additional AODA Definitions:

**Guide Dog:** A highly-trained working dog that has been trained at one of the special facilities to provide mobility, safety and increased independence for people who are blind.

**Service Animal:** The Service Regulation defines a "service animal" as "an animal for a person with disability". In this policy, a service animal is:

- any animal used by a person with a disability for reasons relating to the disability; or
- where the person provides a letter from a physician confirming that they require the animal for reasons relating to their disability; or
- where the person provides 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.

**Support Person:** A support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to goods and services.

#### 5. Customer Service Policy, Practice and Procedure

##### 5.1 The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities

WSI / King 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 by:

- ensuring that all customers receive the same value and quality;
- allowing customers with disabilities to do things in their own ways, 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 customers 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 the customer's disability.

**Leading Practices:** WSI / King employees and representatives will be encouraged to be pro-active in seeking solutions and removing barriers.

The term "*persons with disabilities*" will be the norm, and if a specific condition must be referenced, the condition will be referenced last (e.g., person with low vision). The following are some general tips that may help make communication and interaction with or about people with all types of disabilities more successful:

- Remember to put people first. It is proper to say person with a disability, rather than disabled person or the disabled.

- It is best to wait until an individual describes his or her situation to you, rather than to make your own assumptions. Many types of disabilities have similar characteristics and assumptions may be wrong.

When WSI / King bills for services, it should demonstrate a commitment to providing accessible invoices to all of our customers. This means that invoices should be provided in alternate formats upon request (e.g., hard copy, large print, email) and that staff is prepared to answer questions customers may have about the content of the invoice.

## 5.2 The Use of Assistive Devices

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing goods or services provided by WSI / King. 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. When an individual requires assistive devices for the purposes of mobility, service will be provided on the first floor or in a location that meets the needs of the customer.

**Leading Practices:** Every employee who interacts with customers/clients or other third parties will be trained on how to assist with various assistive devices, should their assistance be required.

## 5.3 The Use of Guide Dogs and Service Animals

A customer or other third parties with a disability that is accompanied by a guide dog or service dog will be allowed access to premises that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law. If a guide dog or service animal is excluded by law, WSI / King will try to offer alternative methods to enable the person with a disability to access goods and services, when possible.

**Recognizing a Guide Dog and/or Service Animal:** If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used by the customer for reasons relating to his or her disability, WSI / King may request verification from the customer. 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.

**Care and Control of the Animal:** The customer/client that is accompanied by a guide dog or service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all time.

**Allergies:** If a health and safety concern presents itself, for example in the form of a severe allergy to the animal, WSI / King will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals.

**Leading Practices:** Employees will be prepared to respond to requests of water for the service animal and to show the owner an outdoor area where the animal can be taken to relieve itself.

## 5.4 The Use of Support Persons

If a customer/client with a disability is accompanied by a support person, WSI / King will ensure that both persons are allowed to enter the premises together and that the customer/client is not prevented from having access to the support person. All customer/client confidentiality requirements and practices will also apply to support persons.

## 5.5 Notice of Disruptions in Service

Service disruptions may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of WSI / King. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services that customers with disabilities rely on to access or use, reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice.

## 5.6 Customer Feedback

WSI / King shall provide customers/clients with the opportunity to provide feedback on the service provided to persons with disabilities. Information about the feedback process will be readily available to all customers/clients and notice of the process will be made available at location reception. Feedback forms along with alternate methods of providing feedback such as verbally (in person or by telephone) or written (handwritten or email) will be available upon request.

**Leading Practices:** Customers/clients will be informed about the feedback process and how action will be taken if a complaint is received. WSI / King will acknowledge verbal/written/telephone feedback within two business days, and within fifteen business days of the receipt of a mailed/e-mailed complaint. In some cases, it may not be possible or appropriate to acknowledge feedback, for example, if the customer wishes to remain anonymous, or indicates that he/she does not want to receive an acknowledgment. Customers can submit feedback to:

**Nelly de Melo**

WSI Sign Systems Ltd. & KING Architectural Products

Tel: 905-857-8044 Ext. 229 Fax: 905-857-3997 Email: HRinfo@WSISign.com

## 5.7 Training

Training will be provided to all employees who deal with the clients or other third parties; revised training will be provided in the event of changes to legislation or WSI / King's policy, practice and procedure. WSI / King will keep a record of training that includes the dates training was provided, the number of employees and names of employees trained.

The training will include information on the purposes of the AODA, requirements of this Service Regulation, how to communicate and interact with people with disabilities, how to interact with service animal or support person, how to utilize assisted devices that are available at our premises, what to do if a person has difficulty accessing WSI / King services or facilities, and our policies, procedures and practices pertaining to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities.

## 5.8 Notice of Availability and Format of Required Documents (Alternative Formats)

All documents required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, including WSI / King's Accessibility Policy, notices of temporary disruptions, training records, and written feedback process are available upon request, subject to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act ("FIPPA"). When providing these documents to a person with a disability, WSI / King will endeavour to provide the document, or the information contained in the document, in a format that takes the person's disability into account. Notice of the availability of documents required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service will be posted on WSI / King's website at: <http://www.wsisign.com/>

WSI / King shall notify customers that the documents related to the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service are available upon request and in a format that takes into account the customer's disability.

Notification will be given by posting the information in a conspicuous place owned and operated by WSI / King, the website and/or any other reasonable method. 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

## **6. Administration**

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy or its related procedures please contact:

**Nelly de Melo**

WSI Sign Systems Ltd. & KING Architectural Products

Tel: 905-857-8044 Ext. 229 Fax: 905-857-3997 Email: [HRinfo@WSISign.com](mailto:HRinfo@WSISign.com)

## **7. Reference and Related Documents**

- Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
- Ontario Human Rights Code
- WSI/King – AODA-POL-01 – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Policy