*Below are sample policies and practices to ensure compliance with The Accessibility Standard for Customer Service. Some organizations may wish to publicize only the policies and to add the practices to their procedures manual. These are working samples and may not always reflect your specific organization. Please add any other measures that reflect your organization or your customers.*

**Accessibility Standard for Customer Service**

(Company name)’s accessible customer service policy is consistent with the principles of independence, dignity and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

We are committed to the *Accessibility for Manitobans Act* and its customer service regulation. This policy reflects its ongoing practices and measures of the eight requirements of the Customer Service Standard. Any current or future policy or practice not respecting and promoting the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities, will be reviewed, modified or removed.

**Practices or procedures**

1. Communication and information

To determine the barrier, we ask the customer what method of communication works.

We communicate with people disabled by barriers in ways that take into account the nature of the barrier.

Practices:

* Have patience and find a quieter space if required.
* Have easy to read fonts and plain language documents.
* Have paper and pen available if required.
* All publications will include, “This publication is available in alternate formats upon request.”
* Signage or verbal greeting will begin with “How can we help?”
* The website will include documents in alternate formats with large print and alternative text (alt tags) if required.

1. Assistive devices

People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our goods, services or facilities.

In cases where the assistive device presents significant and unavoidable health or safety concerns, we will attempt to use other measures to ensure the person with a disability can access our goods, services or facilities.

Practices:

* Staff is trained and familiar with the various assistive devices that we provide to customers to ensure access to our goods, services or facilities.
* Training includes appropriate interaction of staff with customers using assistive devices. For example, staff will not touch or move assistive devices without customer’s permission.

1. Support persons

We welcome customers accompanied by a support person.

Practices:

* There is no charge extra for support persons. or,
* If there is a fee for a support person, we will notify customers in advance.
* Training includes appropriate interaction of staff with customers accompanied by support persons. For example, staff will address the customer, unless requested to do otherwise.

1. Service animals

We are committed to meeting the requirements of Manitoba’s Human Rights Code and welcome customers accompanied by service animals.

*The Human Rights Code* (Manitoba) defines a service animal to be “an animal that has been trained to provide assistance to a person with a disability that relates to that person's disability.”

A service animal can often be identified through visual indicators, such as its harness or vest, or through the assistance it is providing. In some cases, a person’s disability may prevent the individual from maintaining physical control of the animal. Then, the person is expected to maintain control of the animal through voice, signal or other means.

Practices:

* When it is not easy to identify if an animal is a service animal, staff may ask:
* Is the animal assisting you?
* What assistance has the animal been trained to provide related to your disability?
* If another law prohibits service animals, we will explain why the animal is excluded and discuss with the customer another way of providing goods and services.
* Complete only if applicable: Service animals are prohibited from the following areas…
* Staff will not pet, feed or play with a service animal without permission of its handler.
* Training ensures staff understands the rights of persons accompanied by service animals.

1. Maintain Barrier Free Access

We are committed to maintaining barrier free access to our goods and services.

Practices:

We maintain barrier free access and ensure accessible features are available as intended by:

* keeping hallways, ramps and waiting meeting rooms clear of clutter such as boxes.
* keeping entranceways cleared of snow and ice.
* ensuring the placement of standing signage is not a tripping hazard.
* allowing space for mobility devices.

1. Notice of temporary disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption of services or facilities affecting customers disabled by barriers, we will promptly post notices and, when possible, announce the disruption. A clearly posted notice or announcement will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Services/Facilities that are affected by this policy include:

* accessible washroom
* elevator
* automatic doors

Practices:

The notice will be publicly available in the following ways:

* posted on website
* posted at entrance
* announced on intercom
* immediately explained by service provider
* time line given if known

1. Feedback process

We welcome feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Customer feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns.

Practices:

Customers can provide feedback in the following ways:

* email
* phone
* visit reception desk
* website

We will provide customers accessible feedback formats and communication supports on request.

All feedback is directed to the (position title or department). There is an immediate response regarding the receipt of feedback. Customers can expect to hear back in (number of days or weeks).

1. Training

All staff receive training on accessible customer service and new employees are trained within [timeframe] after being hired.

Training includes:

* the purpose of *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act* and the requirements of the Customer Service Standard
* the policies and actions related to the Customer Service Standard
* how to interact and communicate with people disabled by barriers, including persons 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 our goods, services or facilities

If there are any changes to our accessible customer service policies, we will inform and train staff.

1. Making public events accessible

(optional for business)

Although only a requirement for the public sector, all organizations could benefit from a policy or practice that assures easy access for everyone at the organization’s meetings and public events

Practices:

Public events are accessible by:

* announcing events in a manner that is accessible.
* holding event(s) in accessible meeting places.
* inviting requests for relevant disability accommodations.

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CEO Name CEO Signature

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Date

*A copy of the final policy will be posted in a prominent location at the workplace and on the company’s website.*

**Source:**

Disabilities Issues Office (DIO)

630-240 Graham Avenue, Winnipeg MB R3C 0J7

Phone: 204-945-7613

Fax: 204-948-2896

dio@gov.mb.ca

Available in alternate formats, upon request.

Visit [www.AccessibilityMB.ca](http://www.AccessibilityMB.ca) to learn more.

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