

GARDINER MILLER ARNOLD LLP (“GMA”)

Customer Service Policy, Practice and Procedure

(pursuant to Regulation 429/7 of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (“AODA”))

Introduction

Every person or organization that provides goods and services to members of the public or other third parties and has at least one employee in Ontario must comply with the customer service standards set out in regulation 429/7 to the AODA. The AODA customer service standards outline what businesses and other organizations in Ontario must do to make their goods and services more accessible to people with disabilities.

GMA’s goal is to provide its goods and services to all individuals in an inclusive and accommodating manner and to implement measures which will enable individuals with disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from such goods and services.

GMA is committed to making its goods and services accessible in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities, integrates the provision of goods and service to persons with disabilities with the provision of goods and services to others, and provides equal opportunities to obtain, use and benefit from goods and services.

Definition of Disability under AODA

Under the AODA “disability” means:

- (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.

Specific Policies and Procedures

Communication

All employees and contractors of GMA shall communicate with individuals in a manner that takes into account a person's disability and allow a person with a disability to select and control the means of communication.

All documents required under the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service shall be made available to members of the public upon written request. Materials and publications produced by GMA shall include a statement indicating that the material and/or publication "is available in an alternative format upon request."

If requested, an alternate format shall be provided in a manner in which is agreed upon between the requester and GMA, and which takes into account the person's disability (e.g. Braille, audio recordings, electronic copies, large print). All requests for alternative formats shall be immediately communicated in writing to GMA.

GMA is committed to providing accessible invoices to all of our customers. For this reason, invoices will be provided in alternate formats upon request and GMA will answer any questions customers may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone or email.

Feedback

GMA is committed to continuous improvement. To this end, anyone who acquires GMA's goods and services and who wishes to provide any feedback about how to provide goods or services to a person with a disability and/or improve the Policy or any protocol may do so by contacting GMA at the address noted below.

All feedback shall be acknowledged by GMA, in writing. Any action taken as a result of a feedback should be communicated to the person as soon as possible.

Gardiner Miller Arnold LLP
Barristers & Solicitors
390 Bay Street, Suite 1202
Toronto, ON M5H 2Y2

Attn: Andrea C. Lusk

Tel: 416-363-2614

Fax: 416-363-8451

Email: andrea.lusk@gmalaw.ca

Notwithstanding the above, GMA shall accept feedback communicated in any reasonable manner at the request of a person with a disability.

Service Animals

Persons with disabilities shall be permitted to enter and remain in the office of GMA with a service animal unless otherwise excluded by law. If the animal is excluded by law, GMA shall provide or arrange for other measures to enable a person to obtain, use or benefit from GMA's goods or services on a case-by-case basis.

An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if (a) it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or (b) if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

Support Person

Persons with disabilities shall be permitted to enter the Property with a support person and stay with the support person while on the premises. Any discussions of a privileged or confidential nature shall be had in the absence of the support person, if possible, unless the support person's presence is specifically authorized by the client.

"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 or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

Training

Any staff that deals with the public on behalf of GMA shall be familiar with this Policy and shall be appropriately trained to ensure that his or her interaction with members of the public takes the above specific policies into account.

Third party organizations providing goods or services on behalf of GMA shall provide relevant training, learning opportunities or direction to employees and volunteers regarding their roles and responsibilities under the AODA if required.

Notices of Temporary Disruptions

GMA shall ensure that notice of any temporary disruption in whole or in part in the facilities of services shall be clearly posted a minimum of 5 business days before such disruption, except in the case of an emergency. In case of a temporary disruption in whole or in part of GMA's facilities or services, alternate methods for accessing the services and facilities shall be included in the notice of disruption.

Emergency Situations

Staff will be familiar with emergency procedures and how to assist individuals or staff who may require help during an emergency.

Notice of Policy and Copies

GMA will post a notice within 30 days of adoption of this Policy that the written documents required under the Customer Service Standard are available upon request. This notice shall advise of the documents' availability in an easily seen place or a notice

may be posted on GMA's website, or by some other method that is reasonable. Any individual who requests a copy of GMA's Policy shall be provided with a hard copy within 15 business days of a request. If the person requesting documents is a person with a disability, the documents must be provided in a format that takes into account that person's disability.

After 30 days of the notice being posted, it may be removed at the discretion of GMA.

Requests for Information or Accommodation

GMA welcomes requests for accommodation or further information about the requirements of the AODA. Such requests should be addressed as follows:

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Toronto, ON M5H 2Y2

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