

Policy Title:	ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS for CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY (AODA)
Approved by:	Paul Irwin, HR Lead
Approval Date:	January 1, 2012
Review Date:	October 1, 2012; May 30, 2017; June 22, 2021
Purpose:	To meet the requirements of <i>Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07</i> under the <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005</i>

STATEMENT OF POLICY

SSW strives to provide services in a manner that is accessible to all of our customers, and respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are committed to offering equal opportunity to access our services and to providing the benefit of the same services, in the same place and in a similar way to all customers.

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07* under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and applies to the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties, not to the goods themselves.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all SSW Employees.

PROVIDING GOODS AND SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

SSW is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. We will train staff who communicate with customers on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

Telephone Services

We will train staff to communicate with customers over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly.

Assistive Devices

We are committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services. We will provide training with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods or services.

Billing

We are committed to providing accessible invoices to all of our customers. We will answer any questions customers may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone or email.

Use of Service Animals and Support Persons

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal or support person on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties. We will also ensure that all staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

SSW will provide customers with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. The notice will be placed at all public entrances and service counters on our premises.

Training for Staff

SSW will provide training to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies, practices and procedures.

Training will include the following:

- The purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of 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
- How to use the equipment or devices available on provider's premises or otherwise that may help with the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities.
- SSW's policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard.

Applicable staff will be trained on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way goods and services are provided to people with disabilities. Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

Feedback Process

Comments on our services regarding how well these expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated. Feedback can be made by contacting Renata Skawina, Human Resources Business Partner at renata.skawina@ssw.ca or 905-287-2882.