

## Accessible Customer Service Standard Policy

The Township of North Kawartha strives to provide services to all residents and visitors, including those with disabilities.

Through our Accessible Customer Service Standard Policy, the Township will make reasonable efforts to ensure the following:

- The goods and services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- The provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities and others, will be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary. Whether temporary or permanent, these measures should enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services.
- Persons with disabilities will be given an opportunity equal to that given to others, to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services.
- Persons with disabilities may use assistive devices and/or support persons in the access of goods and services.

## Feedback

The Township of North Kawartha welcomes any comments on the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities. Please send comments to:

**Connie Parent, Clerk**

Email: [c.parent@northkawartha.ca](mailto:c.parent@northkawartha.ca)

Telephone: 705-656-4445 ext. 234

### In-person:

The Township of North Kawartha  
280 Burleigh Street  
Apsley, ON, K0L 1A0

### Mailing Address:

The Township of North Kawartha  
P.O. Box 550  
Apsley, ON, K0L 1A0

## Resources

North Kawartha Accessible Customer Service Standards Policy  
[www.northkawartha.ca/accessibility](http://www.northkawartha.ca/accessibility)

Accessibility in Ontario for information and legislation

[www.ontario.ca/page/accessibility-in-ontario](http://www.ontario.ca/page/accessibility-in-ontario)



## Understanding Accessible Customer Service



## Background

Ontario has an important law. It has called the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. It is the first of its kind in Canada.

People with disabilities should have the same kind of opportunities as everyone else. They should be able to do the things that most of us take for granted – going to work or school, shopping, taking in a movie or eating out.

That is the goal of Ontario's legislation. Businesses and organizations who provide goods and services to people in Ontario will have to meet certain accessibility standards in five important areas of our lives: customer service, transportation, information and communications, built environment, and employment.

## What Is Accessible Customer Service

Accessible customer service can mean many things. Mostly, it is the understanding that each individual may need a different type of accommodation.

For example, a person who is blind may need to have information read aloud to them; an individual with a learning disability may need to have instructions written down; and someone who uses a wheelchair may need help in finding a route they can use.

## Service Disruptions

From time to time, there may be disruptions in service, such as a power-assisted door under repair, renovations that limit access to an area, or technology that is temporarily unavailable. If a disruption in service is planned and expected, it is important to provide reasonable notice. Notice can be provided on the Township website, over the phone or in writing. For unexpected service disruptions, notice should be provided in a variety of ways and as quickly as possible.

## How Can I Help You?

Always start with people first. In language, that means stating "person with a disability", rather than "a disabled person". In any interaction, it means addressing the person's service needs, rather than focusing on the disability.

Take some time to understand what some of the various disabilities involve but do not jump to conclusions.

Each person and each disability is different, but it can be helpful to know a little bit about how to best communicate, interact and assist people with disabilities.

Most importantly, relax! People with disabilities are generally aware they may need some accommodations and will work with you. Just remember to ask how you can help.