

DEFINITIONS:

Employee means any person employed by the municipality, and includes the Chief Administrative Officer, designated officers, full time, part time, contract, or casual employees, and volunteers.

Municipality means the Town of Arborg.

Service Animal means an animal trained to provide assistance to a person with a disability that relates to that person's disability

SCOPE:

This Policy applies to all employees of the Municipality. Any organizations and facilities with either partial or whole ownership by the municipality shall abide by all applicable accessibility legislation. They shall structure their rules and operations to reflect this policy and protect the rights of persons who experience accessibility challenges.

POLICY:

In compliance with the Province of Manitoba Customer Service Standard Regulation 171/2015, as part of the *Accessibility for Manitobans Act*, the Town of Arborg requires all employees to adhere to this Policy for Customer Service.

In general staff should never make assumptions about a customer's abilities. The starting point for serving people of all abilities is to simply ask: How can I help you?

General Customer Service Standards:

Customers are to be addressed respectfully at all times by all employees and designated officials.

Staff will conduct customer service interactions by speaking in a clear and concise manner while maintaining eye contact. Speak directly to the customer. If the customer indicates they need an alternate form of communication, staff will accommodate that request by engaging in a written communication or by utilizing an online translator.

Employees shall, at all times, treat every customer equally regardless of ability and/or personal bias.

Where a customer has a support person present, communicate directly with the customer where possible. Answers to questions asked through the support person should be directed to the customer at all times, regardless of whether the support person acts as interpreter. Confidential account information must not be given to a support worker without the consent of the account holder.

Town of Arborg **Accessibility Plan 2017- 2022**
Customer Service ~ Policy No. 2017-01 ~ Schedule "A"

Upon request, employees shall assist customers with: reading of document(s), completion of forms or applications, writing of cheques, or any other task within the scope of the Municipal service provided, so long as all actions are compliant with Federal and Provincial laws, and Municipal By-laws and Policies.

Where physical barriers exist, employees are to provide accommodation by; opening & closing of doors, aiding customer upon entering or exiting the premises if requested, conducting business on the customer side of the counter, and/or inviting the customer into an alternative space more accommodating and private if required.

Provide documents to customers in alternate formats where possible. For example, reprinting a form or document in a larger font; or posting to Municipal website in Word format for screen reader software usage. Include this information on all documents published or available to the public.

Employees will refrain from touching or moving customer's property, including any assistive devices, without the express permission of the customer.

Employees must keep works spaces tidy and accessible, and all aisles, hallways, entrances and exits must be kept clear of any item(s) that may impede the access of a customer, whether able bodied or not.

Regardless of whether buildings are physically accessible (i.e. power doors, ramps, etc) or whether disabled parking is designated, employees of the Municipality and its entities, where physically able, must not occupy parking spaces closest to the entrance of any Municipal building.

Service Animals

Service animals are not considered pets and therefore are exempt from any licensing requirement by the Municipality and are welcome in all Municipal buildings while working.

Notice of Inaccessibility

Should one or any of the accessibility services be unavailable, post the information until such time as the service is restored.

Fees

Where fees are charged for entrance and/or attendance, consideration of a reduced rate for support workers is suggested. Prior notification should be communicated to support workers if attending a public event with admission charges. Municipal entities must address, standardize and communicate the admission standard for support workers to all staff. Fees shall not be charged for the printing of documents in an alternative format when requested.

Staff Training

This policy is mandatory reading for every existing employee whose duties include customer service, and is to be included in the orientation program for all future employees whose duties include customer service. These employees are to be made aware of legislation protecting the rights of persons of all abilities, and online government resources for accessibility training shall be promoted to them.

Municipal Organizations & Facilities

Any organizations and facilities with either partial or whole ownership by the municipality shall abide by all applicable accessibility legislation. They shall structure their rules and operations to reflect this policy and protect the rights of persons who experience accessibility challenges.

Revisions:

Council may, at its discretion and by resolution, amend the Customer Service Standard.

Adopted by Resolution No. 227-2017 passed at the Regular Meeting of Council held on the 13th day of September, 2017.

Randy Sigurdson
Mayor

Lorraine Bardarson
Chief Administrative Officer