

**AODA - INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS REGULATION
CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD POLICY
REISLER FRANKLIN LLP**

INTENT

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of the Customer Service Standards included in the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 (IASR), under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). It applies to the provision of services to the public or other third parties, not to the services themselves.

OUR COMMITMENT

Reisler Franklin LLP strives at all times to provide its services to all customers/clients including persons with disabilities in a way that respects their dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity. This commitment is consistent with the firm's mission to deliver services in a welcoming and supportive environment and with the principles of equity, accessibility, diversity and fairness in the treatment of all individuals.

Any policy, practice or procedure of Reisler Franklin LLP that does not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

DEFINITIONS

Disability: As defined by the AODA and the Ontario Human rights Code, disability refers to:

- 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;
- A condition of mental impairment or developmental disability;
- Learning disability or dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- Mental disorder; or
- An injury or disability for which government benefits are received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

Assistive Device: A technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities such as moving, communicating, breathing, remembering, reading or lifting. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that customers/clients bring with them such as walkers, wheelchairs, oxygen tanks, magnifiers for reading, etc... These devices help the person to maintain their independence at home, at work and in the community.

Support Persons: Any persons, whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member, or friend, who accompany a person with a disability in order to help with communications, mobility, personal care, medical needs, or with access to goods or services.

Guide Dog: A highly trained working dog that has trained at one of the facilities listed in Ontario Regulation 58 under the Blind Persons' Rights Act, to provide mobility, safety and increased independence for people who are blind.

Service Dog: As reflected in Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562 a dog other than a guide dog for the blind is a service dog if it is readily apparent to an average person that the dog functions as a service dog for a person with a medical disability or if the person who requires a dog can provide on request a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires a service dog.

Service Animal: An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if the animal can be readily identified as one as a result of visual indicators such as the vest or harness worn by the animal and the person provides documentation from one of the following regulated health professional confirming the person requires the animal for reasons related to a disability:

- A member of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario
- A member of the College of Chiropractors of Ontario
- A member of the College of Nurses of Ontario
- A member of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario
- A member of the College of Optometrists of Ontario
- A member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
- A member of the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario
- A member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario
- A member of the College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered mental Health Therapists of Ontario

SCOPE

This policy applies to the operations of Reisler Franklin LLP. In accordance with the Customer Service Standards under the *AODA*, this policy addresses the following:

- A. The Provision of Services to Persons with Disabilities;
- B. Communication;
- C. The Use of Assistive Devices;
- D. The Use of Guide Dogs, Service Animals and Service Dogs;
- E. The Use of Support Persons;
- F. Billing;
- G. Notice of Service Disruptions;
- H. Customer Feedback;
- I. Training;
- J. Notice of Availability, Accountability and Format of Required Documents.

A. PROVISION OF SERVICES TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Reisler Franklin LLP will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity by:

- Ensuring that all customers/clients receive the same value and quality;
- Allowing customers/clients with disabilities to do things in their own ways, at their own pace when accessing services as long as this does not present a safety risk;
- Providing customers/clients with an equal opportunity to learn about, use or benefit from the firm's services by using alternative methods when possible;
- Taking into account individual needs when providing services; and
- Communicating in a manner that takes into account the customer's/client's disability.

B. COMMUNICATION

All Reisler Franklin LLP employees will communicate with people with disabilities in a way that takes their needs into consideration. Reisler Franklin LLP will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities in a timely manner and at no additional cost to the individual.

Telephone Services – The firm is committed to providing fully accessible telephone service to its customers/clients. Our staff will communicate with customers/clients over the telephone in a way that takes each disabled person's needs into consideration.

Written Correspondence – The firm will offer to communicate with customers/clients by email or written correspondence if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs.

C. USE OF ASSISTIVE DEVICES

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing services provided by Reisler Franklin LLP.

In cases where the assistive device presents a safety concern or where accessibility might be an issue, other reasonable measures will be used to ensure the access of services. For example, where an elevator is not present and where an individual requires assistive devices for the purposes of mobility, service will be provided in a location that meets the needs of the customer.

D. USE OF GUIDE DOGS, SERVICE ANIMALS AND SERVICE DOGS

People with disabilities who are accompanied by guide dog, service animal or service dog will be allowed access to premises that are open to the public and other third parties unless otherwise excluded by law. "No pet" policies do not apply to guide dogs, service animals and/or service dogs. The customer/client who is accompanied by a guide dog, service dog and/or service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all times.

A customer/client with a disability that is accompanied by a guide dog or a service dog will be allowed access to food service areas that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law. Other types of service animals are not permitted into food service areas due to the health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562 Section 60.

If a guide dog, service animal or service dog is excluded by law, Reisler Franklin LLP will offer alternative methods to enable the person with a disability to access services, when possible (for example, securing the animal in a safe location and offering the guidance of an employee).

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used by the customer/client for reasons relating to his or her disability, Reisler Franklin LLP may request that the customer/client provide documentation from a regulated health professional confirming the need for a service animal.

If a health and safety concern presents itself for example in the form of a severe allergy to the animal, Reisler Franklin LLP will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals.

E. THE USE OF SUPPORT PERSONS

Reisler Franklin LLP is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. If a customer/client with a disability is accompanied by a support person, the firm will ensure that both persons are allowed to enter the premises together and that the customer/client is not prevented from having access to the support person.

There may be times where seating and availability prevent the customer and support person from sitting beside each other. In these situations Reisler Franklin LLP will make every reasonable attempt to resolve the issue.

In situations where confidential information might be discussed, consent will be obtained from the customer, prior to any conversation where confidential information might be discussed.

Where Reisler Franklin LLP requires a support person to accompany a client/customer with a disability due to health and safety reasons, and where the person with a disability has agreed to the accompaniment, the firm will consult with them to best meet their needs. Reisler Franklin LLP will not charge the support persons any fees or fares.

F. BILLING

Reisler Franklin LLP will provide accessible invoices to all of its customers/clients. For this reason, invoices will be provided in the following formats upon request - hard copies, large print and email. The firm will answer any questions customers/clients may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone or email.

G. NOTICE OF TEMPORARY SERVICE DISRUPTION

Service disruptions may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of Reisler Franklin LLP. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services that peoples with disabilities rely on to access or use Reisler Franklin LLP's services, reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice. In some circumstances such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruptions, advance notice may not be possible.

The following information will be included in notifications unless it is no readily available or known: a description of the services that are disrupted or unavailable, the reason for the disruption, how long the disruption will last and a description of available alternatives, if available.

Reisler Franklin LLP will provide notices of disruption by: posting notices in conspicuous places, contacting customers/clients with appointments via email or phone, verbally telling customers/clients if they call the office or by any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstance.

H. FEEDBACK PROCESS & QUESTIONS

The ultimate goal of Reisler Franklin LLP is to meet and surpass expectations while serving customers/clients with disabilities. Comments on how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

The firm shall provide customers/clients with the opportunity to provide feedback on the services provided to customers/clients with disabilities. Information about the feedback process will be readily available to all customers/clients; the firm will provide or arrange accessible formats and communication supports on the feedback process upon request.

Feedback can be submitted via telephone to 416-645-8000, email to info@reislerfranklin.com or verbally in person to the office manager. Customer/clients who provide formal feedback will receive acknowledgement of their feedback and can expect to hear back within three (3) business days. Complaints will be promptly addressed.

I. TRAINING FOR STAFF

Reisler Franklin LLP will provide training to every person who is an employee of, student or a volunteer with the firm, every person who participates in developing the provider's policies and every person who provides services on behalf of the firm.

Regardless of the form, training will include the following:

- The purposes of the AODA and the requirements of the customer service standard
- Instructions on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- Instructions on how to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog, service dog or other service animal or a support person.
- Instructions on how to use the devices and be familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers/clients with disabilities.
- Instructions on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing the firm's services
- Reisler Franklin LLP policies, practices and procedures relating to the Customer Service Standard.

Reisler Franklin LLP will provide training as soon as practicable. Training will be provided to new employees during orientation and on an ongoing basis (as required) when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

Reisler Franklin LLP will keep accurate and up-to-date training records. These records shall include the dates of the training, and the individuals to whom the training was provided.

J. NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND FORMAT OF DOCUMENTS

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to customers/clients with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of a policy is not understood, an explanation should be provided by, or referred to the office manager of Reisler Franklin LLP.

The office manager is responsible for the implementation of this policy and is also responsible for maintaining supporting documentation associated with the Customer Service Standard. This policy and its related procedures will be reviewed as required in the event of legislative changes, or changes to company procedures.

A copy of this policy is available free upon request by contacting the office manager. In addition, a copy of this policy is available on the firm's website at www.reislerfranklin.com.