

HHS Volunteer Association
POLICY & PROCEDURES

Policy Type:	Retail & Parking Operations
Policy Title:	ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY
Procedure Title:	n/a
Approved By:	HHSVA Management Team
Date Approved:	January, 2013
Revised By:	
Date Revised:	

1. PURPOSE

Under the Accessibility for Ontarians Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) the goal is to ensure that the provision of goods and services provided to those with disabilities are consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity. Hamilton Health Sciences Volunteer Association is committed to providing a barrier-free environment for our customers. The objective of this policy is not only to ensure that we meet the requirements of the Customer Service Standards as defined in the Act and promote the core principles as described below, but to also provide a shopping environment that reflects our organizations values including Respect, Excellence, Team Focus, Accountability and Leadership. This policy applies to all individuals who, on behalf of the Hamilton Health Sciences Volunteer Association deal with members of the public or other third parties. This includes our employees, volunteers, agents and contractors.

2. POLICY

Hamilton Health Sciences Volunteer Association is committed to providing exceptional and accessible service for its customers by ensuring that goods and services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence to all. The provision of services to persons with disabilities will be integrated wherever possible. Persons with disabilities will be given an opportunity equal to that given to others, to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services provided by and on behalf of the HHSVA. Every attempt will be made to accommodate accessibility needs as they are identified. When access to resources impedes accommodation an alternate measure will be taken to provide the service, in consultation with relevant parties. The HHSVA will provide the public notice of the availability of the documents required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service upon request. Notice of availability will be provided on the web site and through other printed methods.

3. DEFINITIONS

Accessibility Report – A report required to be filed pursuant to section 14 of the Act.

Assistive Device – Any device used to assist a person in performing a particular task or tasks or to aid that person in activities of daily living.

Disability – A disability includes:

Vision Disabilities	Learning Disabilities
Hearing Disabilities	Health Disabilities
Deaf-blind Disabilities	Speech or language Disabilities
Physical Disabilities	

Service Animal – An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability,

- a. If 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 – A person who accompanies a person with a disability to assist with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

4. CORE PRINCIPLES OF THE POLICY

Hamilton Health Sciences Volunteer Association will ensure that the Policy and related practices and procedures are consistent with the following 4 core principles:

1. Dignity – Persons with a disability must be treated as valued customers as deserving of service as any other customer.
2. Equality of Opportunity – Persons with a disability should be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from our goods and services.
3. Integration – Wherever possible, persons with a disability should benefit from our goods and services in the same place and in the same or similar manner as any other customer. In circumstances where integration does not serve the needs of the person with a disability, goods and services will, to the extent possible, be provided in another way that takes into account the person's individual needs.
4. Independence – Goods and services must be provided in a way that respects the independence of persons with a disability. To this end, we will always be willing to assist a person with a disability but will not do so with express permission of the person.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

Hamilton Health Sciences Volunteer Association has a management team responsible for:

1. Developing and implementing policies, practices and procedures to ensure the accessible provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities.
2. Implementing an accessibility training program as required under the Act .
3. Developing a feedback procedure as required under the Act.
4. Filing Accessibility Reports as required under section 14 of the Act.

6. PROVIDING GOODS AND SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

6.1 Communication

(a) Accessible Mediums of Communication

The Hamilton Health Sciences Volunteer Association strives to communicate with members of the public in a manner that is accessible. Mediums of accessible communication we currently employ include: print, telephone, e-mail, internet and fax. A pad of paper and pen can be made available at the cash for persons with disabilities to use.

(b) Communicating with Persons with a Disability

The Hamilton Health Sciences Volunteer Association strives to communicate with persons with a disability in a manner that takes into account the disability. Approaches for communication are set out in our accessibility training program.

6.2 Assistive Devices

Persons with a disability are permitted, where possible, to use their own Assistive Device when in our areas for the purposes of obtaining, using or benefiting from our goods and services. If there is a physical, technological or other type of barrier that prevents the use of an Assistive Device in our areas, we will first endeavour to remove that barrier. If we are not able to remove the barrier, we will ask the person how he/she can be accommodated and what alternative methods of service would be more accessible to him/her. We will make the best efforts to provide an alternative means of assistance to the person with a disability.

6.3 Accessibility to Our Areas

Our shops and services are located with a hospital facility which already takes into account doors with automated openers, adapted adequate washroom facilities and trained employees to offer customer service assistance to persons with disabilities. We have also incorporated additional initiatives to ensure accessibility to our services and products provides for equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities. These initiatives include designing counter heights to provide for better service and accommodation to those in wheelchairs as well as designating handicapped seating areas.

6.4 Service Animals

Persons with a disability may enter our areas accompanied by a Service Animal and keep the Service Animal with them, if the public has access to such areas and the Service Animal is not otherwise excluded by law. If it is not already apparent that the animal is a Service Animal, the Hamilton Health Sciences Volunteer Association may ask the person with a disability for a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to his/her disability. Staff will receive training on how to interact with persons with a disability accompanied by a Service Animal.

6.5 Support Persons

A person with a disability may enter our areas with a Support Person and have access to the Support Person while in our areas. The Hamilton Health Sciences Volunteer Association may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a Support Person where it is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others in our areas.

6.6 Notice of Temporary Disruptions

The Hamilton Health Sciences Volunteer Association will notify customers if there is a planned or unexpected disruption of a good or service that persons with disability use to access our goods and services. The notice will be posted at the entrance of the applicable area and on the home page of our website. The notice will include the following information:

- (i) That the shop or service is unavailable.
- (ii) The anticipated duration of the disruption.
- (iii) The reason for the disruption.
- (iv) Alternatives, if available.

7. TRAINING AND RECORDS

The Hamilton Health Sciences Volunteer Association will provide training, and ongoing training as required under the Act, to all persons whom this Policy applies as well as to those persons charged with developing this Policy and related procedures and practices.

a. Content of Training

Training will include:

- i. A review of the policy which includes the purpose of the Act and requirements of the Standard.

- ii. How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.
- iii. How to interact with persons with a disability who use an Assistive Device or require the assistance of a Service Animal or Support Person.
- iv. How to use equipment or devices made available on our premises to assist persons with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services.
- v. What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing our areas and/or services.
- vi. Training on the various Assistive Devices that may be used by persons with a disability while accessing our goods and services.
- vii. How to use facilities or services made available in our areas to assist persons with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services.

b. Timing of Training

Training will be provided to all persons to whom this Policy applies as soon as is reasonable after he or she is assigned their applicable duties, generally within sixty (60) days of original hire date. Managers are responsible for ensuring compliance with training deadlines for their direct reports.

c. Documenting Training

Records of the training provided, including the training protocol and the dates on which the training is provided shall be maintained in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

8. FEEDBACK PROCEDURE

a. Receiving Feedback

The Hamilton Health Sciences Volunteer Association welcomes and appreciates feedback regarding this Policy and its implementation. Feedback can be provided in the following ways:

- i. In person at any of our shops or services with the Hamilton Health Sciences
- ii. By telephone at 905-527-4322 x44356
- iii. In writing to: The Hamilton Health Sciences Volunteer Association
c/o Human Resources Manager
P.O. Box 2000, Station A
Sanatorium Road, Wilcox Building, Room 246
Hamilton, ON L9C 1C4
- iv. A link to a copy of the policy will be available on our website at www.hamiltonheathsciences.ca/hhsva

b. Responding to Feedback

The Hamilton Health Sciences Volunteer Association has a feedback protocol to enable it to receive and respond to comments, including complaints. Hamilton Health Sciences Volunteer Association values all feedback from its customers. Feedback on accessible service provides us an opportunity to evaluate how we are meeting the needs of our customers with disabilities with a focus to improve. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated. The feedback process is promoted on the website and through Customer Comment Cards located in all Hamilton Health Sciences Volunteer Association managed areas. Feedback can be communicated in a variety of ways in order to meet the needs of the person with a disability requesting the feedback in a format that takes the person's disability into account and includes in person (if possible), by telephone, in writing or by e-mail as some examples and will be directed to the respective Site Manager for follow-up.

9. DOCUMENTATION TO BE MADE AVAILABLE

This Policy and related practices and protocols, shall be made available to any member of the public upon request. Notification of this will be posted on the Hamilton Health Sciences Volunteer Association website.

