

DUFFERIN-PEEL CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
BOARD POLICY /REGULATIONS

Board Policy Number: 11.00

Subject: Provision of Services to Persons with Disabilities

Effective Date: (Motion 038) January 26, 2010 (*Effective January 1, 2010*)

The Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board is committed to providing Customer Service to persons with disabilities in a manner that:

- a) respects their dignity and independence;
- b) is integrated as fully as practicable into the method of service delivery;
- c) ensures reasonable efforts are made to provide an opportunity equal to that given to other customers to obtain and use our goods and services, and
- d) allows persons with disabilities to benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in a similar way to other customers.

The purpose of this policy is to outline how the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board, as a designated public sector organization, and as a service provider is complying with the requirements of Ontario Regulation 429/07, the *Customer Service Standard* for serving people with disabilities.

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (the Act)* and specifically the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 (*the Regulation*) requires every provider of goods and services to establish policies, regulations and procedures governing the provision of its goods or services to persons with disabilities

This policy applies to the provision of goods or services to members of the public, parents, guardians or other third parties, by or on behalf of the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board (*See separate relevant policies for staff and students, as applicable.*)

All staff, Board volunteers, third parties who are responsible for delivering goods and services to members of the public or other third party are expected to comply with this policy

All Board Policies, Regulations and Procedures related to the provision of goods and services must also comply with *the Act* and *the Regulation*.

The Board will establish procedures on how their goods and services will be provided to people with disabilities and ensure they are consistent with the principles set out in the *Customer Service Standard*. These principles are dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity

To ensure ongoing efficient and effective adherence to the Board's policy on Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, the Board, its school-based administrators and its Managers, including those representing the Board in multi-Board consortia will take into account the impact on people with disabilities when purchasing new equipment, designing new systems or planning a new initiative.

Definitions

Customer is any person who uses the goods and services of the Board;

Third Party Contractor is any person or organization acting on behalf of or as an agent of the Board (bus operators, non-staff psychologist).

Assistive Devices are technical aids, communication devices, or medical aids modified or customized for use in increasing, maintaining or improving the functional ability of a person with a disability and may include, but are not limited to, wheelchairs, walkers, white canes used by people who are blind or who have low vision, note taking devices, portable magnifiers, recording machines, assistive listening devices, personal oxygen tanks and devices for grasping. Assistive Devices may accompany the customer or already be on the premises, and are used to assist persons with disabilities in carrying out activities or in accessing the services provided by the Board;

“Disability” is defined as

- 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 a developmental disability;
- a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- a mental disorder; or
- an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997* (handicap).

A ‘**guide dog**’ means a guide dog as defined in Section 1 of the *Blind Persons’ Rights Act*

An animal is a ‘**Service Animal**’ for a person with a disability if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by a person for reasons relating to his or her disability or, 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**’ means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services. (A support person is distinct from an employee who supports a student in the system.)

REGULATIONS

11.00 Provision of Services to Persons with Disabilities

COMMUNICATIONS –

Communication can occur in a variety of ways, such as in person, by phone, in writing or online. When communicating with a person with a disability, Board staff and volunteers shall do so in a manner that takes into account the person's individual needs and circumstances. Where possible, it is helpful to ask the person directly how to best communicate with them. If providing information, it may be necessary to offer it in a different format. For example, staff may communicate information that is normally conveyed orally by providing written instructions to a person who is deaf.

Assistive devices or equipment that aide persons with disabilities in communicating, such as assistive listening devices (ALD) or American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters, may also be utilized.

USE OF ASSISTIVE DEVICES -

If a person with a disability uses an assistive device, they must be permitted to enter the premises with the device and to utilize the device, unless excluded by law. Where the device is excluded by law, staff must provide an explanation and other arrangements must be explored in order to provide service. Potential barriers to the use of assistive devices must be removed where possible.

The Communications and Community Relations Department is responsible for making persons with disabilities aware of assistive devices available on Board premises or otherwise supplied by the Board that may help with the provision of goods or services. This may involve posting a sign or including the information in printed or electronic communications. Assistive devices must be offered in a manner that respects the person's dignity and independence. Staff must know how to use equipment or devices available in their specific area in order to provide assistance to those who require it.

USE OF SERVICE ANIMALS -

a) If in order to access Board goods and services, a person with a disability is accompanied by a Guide Dog or other Service Animal, the Board shall ensure that the person is permitted to enter Board property with the animal, and to keep the animal with him/her unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises. (For example, under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*, animals are not allowed in places where food is manufactured, prepared, or processed.)

Where an animal is excluded by law to enter Board property, the Board shall ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Board's goods and services. For example, if a guide dog is excluded by law, a person with low or no vision might need someone to guide him or her while the animal waits in a safe location.

Where the service animal may affect the health and safety of other customers, Board staff shall discuss the situation with both parties and make every effort to meet the needs of both customers.

(See General Administrative Procedure No. 901.02)

USE OF SUPPORT PERSONS –

If in order to access Board goods and services, a person with a disability is accompanied by a Support Person, the Board shall ensure that both persons are permitted to enter the premises together and that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the support person while on the Board premises.

Where applicable, a Notice regarding fees for Support Persons must be clearly posted.

The Board may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a Support Person when on Board premises, but only if a Support Person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises.

(See General Administrative Procedure No. 901.01)

NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTION -

When services that are normally provided to a person with a disability are temporarily unavailable, such as access to an elevator, a disruption of service notice shall be posted at the Board site and on the Board's website, in a timely manner.

(See General Administrative Procedure No. 901.03)

TRAINING -

The following persons shall receive training about the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities:

- a) Every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Board, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise;
- b) Every person who participates in developing policies and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to members of the public or other third parties.

The Human Resources Department is responsible for the Training Standard.

(See General Administrative Procedure No. 901.04)

FEEDBACK PROCESS -

The Board shall develop a process for receiving and responding to feedback about the manner in which it provides goods or services to persons with disabilities. Information about the feedback process will be readily available to the public and permit feedback to be provided by any of the following means: in person, by telephone, in writing or by delivering an electronic text by e-mail or on diskette, or otherwise.

The feedback process must specify the actions that the Board is required to take if a complaint is received.

(See General Administrative Procedure No. 901.05)

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS -

The Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board will provide notice to the public that this policy and any documents that describe practices and procedures with respect to the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities, are readily available upon request. Notice will be posted at a conspicuous place, such as, but not limited to, the Board's external website

Documents will be provided to anyone asking for them. All documents will be made available in an alternative format, upon request

COMPLIANCE -

In order to monitor compliance, the within policy shall be reviewed annually, by the Board's ACCESS DP Committee.

CONTACT –

For further information on Accessibility in the Board, contact the Principal, Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity.