

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF YORK POLICE SERVICES BOARD

Report of the Executive Director – May 27, 2009

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARD FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE – ACTION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Board approve the action plan outlined in this report.

BACKGROUND

In November 2008, Joy Hulton, Regional Solicitor, presented a report entitled *Update on Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act 2005*. Ms Hulton advised the Board that it is currently governed by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act, 2005 (AODA)* and the *Ontarians with Disability Act, 2001 (ODA)*. She noted that under the AODA, provincial standards are being developed in customer service, transportation, information and communication, built environment and employment, and that designated public sector organizations, including municipalities, are required to comply with the provisions of the Customer Service Standard by January 1, 2010. The Board adopted the recommendation to develop an action plan so as to be in compliance by year end.

In preparing this report, the Executive Director consulted with Michelle Herder, Program Manager, Corporate Customer Service Strategy, Strategic Initiatives and Administration, Region of York, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Contact Centre (*ServiceOntario*) and the Big 12 Boards. None of the Big 12 Boards has developed policies under the Customer Service Regulation as some report that they are covered by their municipality's accessibility plan and others question the January 1, 2010 compliance date. There has been no direction received from the Ontario Association of Police Services Boards. Consultation will take place with the Accessibility Coordinator, York Regional Police, after his or her appointment to the organization.

DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

The definition of disability under the AODA is the same as the definition of disability in the Ontario Human Rights Code. This definition of disability applies to the customer service standard.

Section 2, AODA: "Disability" means:

- (a) 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,
- (b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- (c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- (d) a mental disorder, or

- (e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

THE CUSTOMER SERVICE REGULATION AND COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

The Customer Service Regulation requires Police Services Boards and Police Services to make customer service operations accessible for all persons with disabilities by identifying and removing barriers to customer services in operational practices, policies and procedures, communication and staff training. Specifically, it requires compliance in 11 key areas of service delivery to the public. As indicated in the table below, the Board is compliant or in the process of achieving compliance in seven areas. The Board is presently not compliant with respect to staff training requirements and one area (i.e., admission fees) is not applicable to services provided directly by a Police Services Board.

Board Compliance with Customer Service Standard Requirements

Customer Service Standard/Regulation Requirement	Status of Board Compliance
1. Establish policies, practices and procedures on providing goods or services to people with disabilities.	In development
2. Use reasonable efforts to ensure that your policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.	Ongoing
3. Set a policy on allowing people to use their own personal assistive devices to access your goods and use your services and about any other measures your organization offers (assistive devices, services, or methods) to enable them to access your goods and use your services.	In development
4. Communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability.	Yes
5. Allow people with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal in those areas of the premises you own or operate that are open to the public, unless the animal is excluded by another law. If a service animal is excluded by law, use other measures to provide services to the person with a disability.	Yes
6. Permit people with disabilities who use a support person to bring that person with them while accessing goods or services in premises open to the public or third parties.	Yes
7. Where admission fees are charged, provide notice ahead of time on what admission, if any, would be charged for a support person of a person with a disability.	Not applicable
8. Provide notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access or use your goods or services are	Yes*

	temporarily disrupted temporarily disrupted.	<i>* via web site & posted notices</i>
9.	Train staff, volunteers, contractors and any other people who interact with the public or other third parties on your behalf on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard.	No
10.	Train staff, volunteers, contractors and any other people who are involved in developing your policies, practices and procedures on the provision of goods or services on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard.	No
11.	Establish a process for people to provide feedback on how you provide goods or services to people with disabilities and how you will respond to any feedback and take action on any complaints. Make the information about your feedback process readily available to the public.	In development

POLICE SERVICES BOARD'S COMMITMENT TO ACCESSIBILITY

As the governing body of the York Regional Police, the Police Services Board is committed to the fundamental principle of full and equal access to services for disabled citizens in York Region. To ensure compliance with the Customer Service Regulation, the Board has developed an action plan for the services it provides to the public, specifically, its web page, telephone, in person at the Board office, and at public meetings.

ACTION PLAN

1. The Board will establish policies, practices and procedures on providing services to people with disabilities, including the use of personal assistive devices and other methods to facilitate the public's access to Board services.

Responsibility: Executive Director
Timeline: October 2009

2. The Board shall ensure that the Executive Director and Administrative Assistant participate in training sessions offered by the Region of York.

Responsibility: Executive Director
Timeline: 2009 – 2010, as offered by the Region of York

3. The Board will develop a process for those with disabilities to provide feedback on services, the Board's process of feedback and action on public complaints. The Board will make the information about its feedback process readily available to the public.

Responsibility: Executive Director
Timeline: October 2009

SUMMARY

The Executive Director has developed an action plan that will ensure the Board's compliance with the Customer Service Standard by January 1, 2010.

Connie Phillipson
Executive Director