

Town of Yarmouth  
**ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR  
CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY**

Effective: March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024  
TOY 73



## **1.0 PURPOSE**

The Town of Yarmouth is committed to being responsive to the diverse needs of all its residents by striving to provide equal access to its programs, services, and facilities, including people with disabilities.

## **2.0 PROCEDURE**

The Town of Yarmouth will develop policies, procedures, training, and practices that address integration, independence, dignity, and equal opportunity, to comply with the legislative requirements prescribed under the Accessibility Act for Nova Scotia (2017), and to promote accessibility.

## **3.0 SCOPE**

The policy applies to the Council and staff of the Town of Yarmouth, including volunteers who interact with the public or other third parties, on behalf of the Town.

## **4.0 DEFINITIONS**

- 4.1 Assistive Devices:** are auxiliary aids such as communication aids, cognition aids, person mobility aids or medical aids (i.e., canes, crutches, wheelchairs, scooters, or hearing aids).
- 4.2 Disabilities:** a physical, mental, intellectual, learning, or sensory impairment, including an episodic disability, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders an individual's full and effective participation in society.
- 4.3 Employees:** for the purposes of this policy, Employees are people who deal with members of the public, or other third parties, on behalf of the Town of Yarmouth, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, or volunteer.
- 4.4 Service Animal:** any animal used by a person with a disability for reasons relating to the disability where it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to their disability; or where the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that they require the animal for reasons relating to their disability; or valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada or a certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school.

**4.5 Support Person:** a person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to assist them with communication, mobility, personal care, or medical needs or with access to goods and services.

#### **5.0 ASSISTIVE DEVICES**

If a person with a disability requires assistive devices to access goods or services from the Town, they are allowed to use such devices.

#### **6.0 SERVICE ANIMALS**

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a guide dog or with other service animal, the Town will permit the person to enter the premises with the animal and keep it with them unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises.

- a. The owner is solely responsible for the supervision, care, and maintenance of the Service Animal and must be always under the control of Owner.
- b. Behaviors that can be considered disruptive, inappropriate, a safety hazard, or otherwise negatively impact the health and wellbeing of others may result in the Service Animal being required to leave the premises.

#### **7.0 SUPPORT PERSONS**

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, they are permitted to enter the premises together and are not prevented from having access to each other while on the premises.

**7.1** The Town may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on its 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. If the person with a disability requires to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, the Town will waive payment of the amount, if any, payable in respect of the support person's admission to the premises or in connection with the support person's presence on the premises

#### **8.0 DISRUPTION OF SERVICES**

If there is a disruption in a particular facility or service used to allow a person with a disability to access goods and services, the Town will give notice of the disruption to the public and the reason for the disruption, the anticipated duration of the disruption and any alternative facilities or services that may be available.

**8.1** This notice will be in a conspicuous place on the premises of the affected Town building, or by other reasonable methods in the circumstances. If the disruption is anticipated, the Town will provide a reasonable amount of advance notice of the disruption.

## **9.0 EMERGENCY MEASURES**

Persons with disabilities can be particularly vulnerable in emergency situations, heightening the importance of providing accessible customer service.

- 9.1** However, the nature of an emergency could impair the ability of the Town to meet its normal standards, but all reasonable efforts will be made to provide accessible services under circumstances.

## **10.0 TRAINING**

The Town will provide training about the provision of its goods and services to persons with disabilities. All Town employees, volunteers, and others who deal with the public or other third parties representing the Town of Yarmouth on an ongoing basis will receive Accessibility Awareness Training within six months of beginning their duties. The Town will also provide ongoing training with respect to changes in its policies, practices, and procedures on an ongoing basis. The Town will keep records of all staff who have received training (e.g., dates, trainer, etc.).

- 10.1** Accessibility Awareness Training will include the following:

- a. How to provide goods and services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;
- b. How to interact and communicate with persons in a manner that considers their disabilities;
- c. The process for people to provide feedback to the Town, its provision of goods and services to person with disabilities, and how the Town responds to the feedback and acts on any complaint;
- d. How to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person to access goods and services;
- e. Information on other Municipal policies, practices, and procedures dealing with the Accessibility Act of Nova Scotia (2017).
- f. A review of the purpose of the Accessibility Act of Nova Scotia (2017) and the requirements of the customer service standard.
- g. How to use equipment or devices available on Town premises or provided by the Town that may help with the provision of goods and services; and
- h. What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing the Town's goods and services.

## **11.0 FEEDBACK PROCESS**

The public can provide feedback on the accessibility of the provision of goods and services by the Town of Yarmouth through the Accessibility Advisory Committee:

- a. By mail address to:  
400 Main Street, Yarmouth, NS, B5A 1G2  
Attn: Accessibility Advisory Committee
- b. In person at: 400 Main Street, Yarmouth, NS, B5A 1G2

c. By email to: [accessibility@townofyarmouth.ca](mailto:accessibility@townofyarmouth.ca)

Feedback will be acknowledged to within three (3) business days of its receipt to the Town and responded to in ten (10) business days.

**Clerk's Annotation for Official Policy Book**

Date of Adoption: March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024

I certify that this 'Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy' was adopted by Council as indicated above.

Town Clerk:

Date: