

## Accessible Client, Supplier and Stakeholder Service Policy

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### Intent

This policy meets the requirements of Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and applies to the provision of services to the public or other third parties.

All services provided by the Windsor Essex Economic Development Corporation (WEEDC) shall follow the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

### Scope

- a) This policy applies to the provision services at premises operated by the Windsor Essex Economic Development Corporation (WEEDC).
- b) This policy applies to Team Members, volunteers, agents or contractors who interact with our clients, suppliers and stakeholders or other third parties that act on behalf of the Windsor Essex Economic Development Corporation (WEEDC).
- c) The section of this policy that addresses the use of guide dogs, service animals and service dogs only applies to the provision services that take place at premises operated by WEEDC.
- d) This policy shall also apply to all persons who participate in the development of WEEDC's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of services to our clients, suppliers and stakeholders.

### Definitions

Assistive Device – is a technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that customers bring with them such as a wheelchair, walker or a personal oxygen tank that might assist in moving, breathing, remembering, hearing, seeing, communicating and/or reading.

Disability – the term disability as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and the Ontario Human Rights Code, refers to:

- any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement 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 or 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 in a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- a learning disability, or 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.

Guide Dog – is a highly-trained working dog that has been 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 Animal – as reflected in Ontario Regulation 429/07, an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if:

- it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the 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.

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
- the person who requires the dog can provide on request a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires a service dog.

Support Person – as reflected in Ontario Regulation 429/07, a 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, medical needs or access to goods and services.

## General Principles

In accordance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07, this policy addresses the following:

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

## A. The Provision of Services to Persons with Disabilities

WEEDC 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 clients, suppliers and stakeholders receive the same value and quality;
- allowing clients, suppliers and stakeholders 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;
- using alternative methods when possible to ensure that clients, suppliers and stakeholders with disabilities have access to the same services, in the same place and in a similar manner;
- taking into account individual needs when providing services; and
- communicating in a manner that takes into account the clients', suppliers' and stakeholders' disability.

## B. Assistive Devices

Clients, suppliers and stakeholders own assistive device(s):

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

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 elevators are 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 clients, suppliers and stakeholders.

## C. Guide Dogs, Service Animals and Service Dogs

Clients, suppliers and stakeholders with a disability and accompanied by guide dog, service animal or service dog will be allowed access to premises open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law. "No pet" policies do not apply to guide dogs, service animals and/or service dogs.

Food Service Areas:

A customer with a disability and accompanied by guide dog or service dog will be allowed access to food service areas 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.*

## Exclusion Guidelines:

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

## Recognizing a Guide Dog, Service Dog and/or Service Animal:

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used by the client, supplier or stakeholder for reasons relating to his or her disability; WEEDC may request service support verification from the client, supplier or stakeholder.

Verification may include:

- a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons related to the disability;
- a 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.

## Care and Control of the Animal:

The client, supplier or stakeholder accompanied by a guide dog, service dog and/or service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all time.

## Allergies:

In the event that a health and safety concern presents itself for example in the form of a person's severe allergy to the animal, WEEDC will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals.

## D. Support Persons

If a client, supplier or stakeholder with a disability is accompanied by a support person, WEEDC will ensure that both persons are allowed to enter the premises together and that the client, supplier or stakeholder is not prevented from having access to the support person.

There may be times where seating and availability prevent the client, supplier or stakeholder and support person from sitting beside each other. In these situations WEEDC will make every reasonable attempt to resolve the issue.

In situations where confidential information might be discussed, consent will be obtained from the client, supplier or stakeholder, prior to any conversation where confidential information might be discussed.

## E. Notice of Disruptions in Service

Service disruptions may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of WEEDC. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services that client, supplier or stakeholder's with disabilities rely on to access or use WEEDC'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.

### Notifications will Include:

In the event that a notification needs to be posted the following information will be included unless it is not readily available or known:

- the services that are disrupted or unavailable;
- the reason for the disruption;
- the anticipated duration of the service disruption; and
- a description of alternative services or options

### Notifications Options:

When disruptions occur WEEDC will provide notice by:

- posting notices in conspicuous places including at the point of disruption, at the main entrance and the nearest accessible entrance to the service disruption and/or on WEEDC website;
- contacting clients, suppliers and stakeholders with appointments;
- verbally notifying clients, suppliers and stakeholders when they are making a reservation or appointment; or
- by any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

## F. Feedback Process

WEEDC shall provide clients, suppliers and stakeholders with the opportunity to provide feedback on the service provided to clients, suppliers or stakeholders with disabilities. Information about the feedback process will be readily available to all clients, suppliers or stakeholders and notice of the process will be made available. Feedback forms along with alternate methods of providing feedback such as verbally (in person or by telephone) or written (hand written, delivered, website or email), will be available upon request.

### Submitting Feedback:

Clients, suppliers and stakeholders can submit feedback to:

Executive Assistant  
(519) 255 9200 ext. 2230  
[info@choosewindsor.essex.com](mailto:info@choosewindsor.essex.com)  
[www.choosewindsor.essex.com](http://www.choosewindsor.essex.com)

Centre of Engineering Innovation  
700 California Avenue, Suite 200  
Windsor, ON N9A 7C5

Clients, suppliers and stakeholders who wish to provide feedback by completing an onsite “Feedback Form” or verbally can do so to any WEEDC Team Member.

Clients, suppliers and stakeholders that provide formal feedback will receive acknowledgement of their feedback, along with any resulting actions based on concerns or complaints that were submitted.

## G. Training

Training will be provided to:

- a) Team Members, volunteers, agents and/or contractors who deal with the public or other third parties that act on behalf of WEEDC; and
- b) those who are involved in the development and approval of clients’, suppliers’ and stakeholders’ service policies, practices and procedures.

### Training Provisions:

As reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, regardless of the format, training will cover the following:

- A review of the purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*;
- A review of the requirements of the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*;
- 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 assistive devices;
  - require the assistance of a guide dog, service dog or other service animal; or
  - require the use of a support person.
- Instructions on how to use equipment or devices that are available at our premises or that we provide that may help people with disabilities; and
- Instructions on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing WEEDC’s services.
- WEEDC’s policies, procedures and practices pertaining to providing accessible customer service to customers with disabilities.

### Training Schedule:

WEEDC will provide training as soon as practicable to new Team Members, volunteers, agents and/or contractor who deal with the clients, suppliers or stakeholders or act on behalf of WEEDC. Revised training will be provided in the event of changes to legislation, procedures and/or practices.

## Record of Training:

WEEDC will keep a record of training including the training dates and the number of Team Members in attendance.

## H. Notice of Availability and Format of Documents

WEEDC shall notify clients, suppliers or stakeholders that the documents related to the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service are available upon request and in a format that takes into account the customer's disability. Notification will be given by posting the information in a conspicuous place operated by WEEDC, WEEDC's website and/or any other reasonable method.

## Administration

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy or its related procedures please contact:

Executive Assistant  
(519) 255 9200 ext. 2230  
[info@choosewindsorsex.com](mailto:info@choosewindsorsex.com)  
[www.choosewindsorsex.com](http://www.choosewindsorsex.com)

Centre of Engineering Innovation  
700 California Avenue, Suite 200  
Windsor, ON N9A 7C5

WEEDC shall review this policy and its related procedures will be reviewed as required in the event of legislative changes.

Ron Gaudet  
Chief Executive Officer