

**TOWN OF MARATHON  
P O L I C Y**

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<b>POLICY: ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE</b>	<b>POLICY NO: AD 0018</b>

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to recognize the Town's obligation to facilitate the implementation of Customer Service Regulation (Reg. 429/07) of the Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).

**SCOPE:**

Staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other people who interact with the public or other third parties on the Town's behalf or are involved in developing policies, practices and procedures on the provision of the Town's goods or services.

**POLICY STATEMENT**

The Town strives to provide services to all residents and visitors, including those with disabilities. Through our Accessible Customer Service Standard policy, the Town will make reasonable efforts to ensure the following:

- Goods and services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;
- The provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities and others will be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary. Whether temporary or permanent, these measures should enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services;
- Persons with disabilities will be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services; and
- Persons with disabilities may use assistive devices and/or support persons in the access of goods and services.

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**Guide Dogs, Service Animals**

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal, the Town will permit the person to enter the premises with the animal and keep it with him or her, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises. If the service animal or guide dog is excluded by law, the Town will look to other available measures to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Town’s goods and services. All other animals are prohibited in any municipally owned and operated building or facilities, vehicles and equipment leased or owned by the Town (By-Law 1598).

**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. 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. Where fees for goods and services are advertised or promoted by the Town, it will provide advance notice of the amount payable, if any, in respect of the support person.

**One Person - One Fare Policy**

Persons with cognitive, visual or physical disabilities that create a barrier to independent use of municipal facilities, programs and events shall submit an application annually to the Marathon Community Services Department to advise that he/she requires a support person. Approved applicants shall be issued a Personal Attendant for Leisure (PAL) card permitting them and one support person access to any municipal recreation facility, program or event according to the policy of “one person – one fare”.

The policy of “one person – one fare” shall be adhered to, i.e., a person attending a municipal recreation facility, program or event and who is accompanied by a support person, shall be charged only one fare or admission. The fare shall be based on the category of the person with the disability, i.e., adult, student, child or senior.

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**Temporary Disruption of Services**

If there is a temporary disruption in a particular facility or service used to allow a person with a disability to access the Town’s goods or services, the Town will give notice of the disruption to the public. The notice will contain information about the nature of the disruption, the facility affected, and the date and expected length of the disruption. Notice may be provided in any of the following formats:

- Posted notices at the affected facility, Town Hall or Recreation Complex and on the Town’s website;
- Announcements through the local media (i.e.g., Marathon Mercury, CFNO, CBQ);
- Announcements on the Town’s voicemail system; and/or
- Phoning persons with a disability, known to use the facility or service, that are likely to be affected.

In the case of a planned disruption, the manager of the affected department will ensure that a minimum of one (1) week’s notice is provided. In the case of an unplanned disruption, the manager will notify the public within twenty-four (24) hours. It is the discretion of the affected manager to utilize whatever means available that are deemed most effective and appropriate based on the situation.

In the case of an unplanned disruption that occurs after hours that is brought to the attention of on-call personnel, he/she will contact the affected manager to handle the situation. If the affected manager cannot be contacted in a timely manner, the on-call person will, in consultation with the C.A.O., be responsible to ensure that the notice provisions of this policy are carried out.

**Feedback Process**

The Town of Marathon welcomes feedback and input from the public and patrons of our facilities on ways we can improve accessibility and barrier-free access. There are a number of ways to provide comments:

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- In writing, by mail, fax, e-mail, via the website, or in person at the Town Hall or Recreation Complex office; and/or
- Verbally in person or by calling a staff member at the Town Hall or Recreation Complex.

All comments received will be forwarded to the Accessibility Working Group for review and comment at its next meeting. The Working Group will assign one of its members or request that the manager of the affected department follow up with the person who submitted the comment to either obtain more information or advise on the status of the suggestion.

### **Assistive Devices**

If a person with a disability requires assistive devices to access goods or services of the own, they are allowed to use such devices. A person with a disability will be allowed to utilize any of the Town’s assistive devices with the assistance of a Town staff member to access the Town’s goods or services.

### **Training**

The Town will provide training to its staff and volunteers about the provision of its goods and services to persons with disabilities. All Town employees and volunteers who deal with the public or other third parties and those involved in developing customer service policies, practices, and procedures, will receive training on Accessible Customer Service by December 31, 2009. Persons that become affiliated with the Town after January 1, 2010, who require training will receive the training within the first three (3) months of their affiliation. The Town will also provide on-going training with respect to changes in its policies, practices, and procedures to those individuals who require such training as soon as practicable. The Town will keep records of the training provided.

Accessible Customer Service training is made up of three (3) training components:

- Brochures – Accessible Customer Service Brochure, Ministry of Community and Social Services’ (MCSS) Customer Service Standard brochure;
- Presentation – One-hour presentation including the DVD, “Talk to Me”: Serving Customers with Disabilities (11 minutes); and/or
- Serve-Ability – On-line course offered by MCSS.

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There are three (3) levels of training to be delivered:

- Level 1 (brochures, presentation, Serve-Ability) – for policy and decision makers (e.g., Management Team, Council), front-line staff (e.g., reception, recreation);
- Level 2 (brochures, presentation) – for staff that have limited contact with the public (e.g., cleaners, maintenance services), volunteers/contractors that deal directly with the public (e.g., Humane Society, Seniors’); and
- Level 3 (brochures) – for volunteers/contractors (e.g., board/commission members)

Human Resources will determine the appropriate level of training. It is the responsibility of the affected manager to ensure that Human Resources is notified of any staff, volunteers, or contractors affiliated with his/her department. In the case of volunteer groups or contractors, a representative of the organization will be given the training (not every member of the organization).

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