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## Customer Service Accessibility Standards and Communication and Information Standards

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### Policy Statement

The Pickering Public Library adheres to the policy requirements with respect to the establishment of accessibility standards for customer service, Ontario Regulation 429/07, and with respect to information and communication, Ontario Regulation 191/11 created under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. The Library makes reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the core principles of the standards.

Customer service will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. People with disabilities should not be forced to accept lesser service, quality or convenience as a result of their disability.

Service delivery will consider how people with disabilities can effectively access and use services provided. Awareness and respect of any individual is paramount when providing service.

There are occasions when customer service must be provided using alternate measures that are not integrated. Alternate measures will only be employed when they cannot be integrated and are the only means of providing customer service to a person with a disability.

People with disabilities will be given an equal opportunity to use and benefit from services provided by the Library. They should not be required to put forward a greater effort in order to access, use or benefit from a service. As a result, additional services may be extended to people with disabilities in order to ensure that they do not need to put forward a greater effort.

## Definitions

### Assistive Device

Any device designed or adapted to assist a person to perform a particular task. Assistive devices include specialized aids that enable people with disabilities to carry out their everyday activities. These include but are not limited to wheelchairs, hearing aids, adaptive computer technologies, ventilators, walkers, crutches and personal amplification devices.

### Disability

A disability is any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, disability since birth, or illness and without limiting the foregoing, includes diabetes, epilepsy, brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a service animal, wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device.

A disability might also be: 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; an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

### Clients

Library clients can be library staff, Board members, citizens and visitors to the Library, volunteers and agents recognized by the Library, and all community stakeholders.

## Policy Principles

### Training

Staff are trained how to provide customer service to people with disabilities in accordance with the core principles of the accessibility standards. Training must be delivered to any Board member, volunteer or any other individual who might reasonably be expected to interact with the public on behalf of the Library or influence the development of policies, practices and procedures. A form of training will be provided to individuals or groups as soon as practicable after that individual or group is assigned with their duties. Any substantive amendment to policy, practice or procedures with respect to the provision of accessible customer service may also necessitate further training.

## Communication

Communication will be provided in a manner that takes into account an individual's disability. Consideration is given to the way in which individuals express, receive and process information without making assumptions about a particular disability. Individuals with the same disability may process information in different ways. The Library will continue to review the nature, manner and methods in which it communicates to people with disabilities in an attempt to improve the accessibility of information and services.

## Website

The Library's website is accessible. It currently conforms to WCAG 2.0 Level AA. The Library's website uses a preset font type and size for optimal layout, but the font can be adjusted by clients to meet their specific needs. Information is readily available in HTML format with Adobe PDF as the standard for documents, forms and reports. The Library is committed to the use of World Wide Web Consortium (W3c.org) best practice technologies when they are available and appropriate for a task and to using the latest versions when supported.

## Print Material

The Pickering Public Library uses Arial 12 point for its official documents, correspondence, reports, minutes, etc.

## Alternate Formats for Printed Documents

The Library will provide any document produced by the Library in an alternate format upon request, unless it is not technically feasible to do so, and subject to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Privacy Act. Alternate formats can include, but are not limited to web access, large print versions of the document or a text-only electronic file that can be read by a computer or printed in Braille. Requests for information in alternate format will be sent to the Manager of Client Services, Christy Harper at [christyh@picnet.org](mailto:christyh@picnet.org) or 905-831-6265 extension 6233. Library staff will make every effort to provide the information in the preferred format as soon as possible.

## Accessible Library Materials

The Library will make a library collection, where they exist, available in an accessible format for clients. The Library has large print, audiobooks, and ebooks. Library staff would be pleased to assist clients find resources that meet their needs.

The Library is a member of the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA), a non-profit run by public libraries that leverages the existing collections of the CNIB. CELA has the largest collection of alternative format materials in Canada and provide clients with both digital and physical formats. Client with print disabilities can now register to access this collection at the Pickering Public Library and materials can be ordered and picked up at your local library branch. Daisy readers and a rotating collection of DAISY Talking Books are also available at the Central Library. For more information, contact Valerie Crease at [valeriec@picnet.org](mailto:valeriec@picnet.org) or 905-831-6265 extension 6248.

## **Programming**

To request Sign Language interpretation for Library programs you wish to attend, please contact the Manager of Client Services, Christy Harper at [christyh@picnet.org](mailto:christyh@picnet.org) or 905-831-6265 extension 6233 to make arrangements. Due to the limited availability of trained Sign Language interpreters, a minimum three weeks' notice is required.

## **TTY (an alternative service channel for the hard of hearing)**

A TTY line is shared between the City Hall and the Library. The number is 905-420-1739. Please note that the line is answered by Customer Care staff at City Hall who will forward your questions to Library staff.

## **Notice of Temporary Disruptions**

Public notices of service disruptions will be provided on the Library's website at [Service Disruptions and Program Cancellations | Pickering Library](#) and placed on our voicemail system at 905-831-6265. A notice will also be displayed on the premises where the disruption is occurring. Such public notices will let clients know when facilities, amenities or services are unavailable, the expected duration of this disruption and alternate services provided, if any.

## **Service Animals**

Service animals are permitted in the Library. People requiring service animals may be required to confirm status of a service animal if its purpose is not immediately evident.

This requirement does not apply where an animal is excluded by law from being on the premises, or if the presence of the service animal adversely affects the health and safety of others. For example, regulations under the Health and Protection and Promotion Act, 1990 and Food Safety and Quality Act, 2001 prohibit animals from entering areas where food is prepared, stored or sold. Where a service animal is excluded by law, the Library will make reasonable efforts to ensure that goods and services can be provided by alternate means.

## **Support Persons**

A support person is an individual hired or chosen by a person with a disability to provide services or assistance with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs, or to assist with accessing services. People with disabilities are welcome to be accompanied by a support person in any area open to the public or to use any Library provided service. Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that people with disabilities are not prevented from having access to their support person while on the premises. In some cases, it may be necessary for the support person to provide consent to rules specific to the service provided, such as confidentiality.

## **Feedback**

The Library is committed using client feedback to enhance accessible service delivery. Comments can be submitted online at the [Assistive Services | Pickering Library](#) webpage or

to the Manager of Client Services, Christy Harper at [christyh@picnet.org](mailto:christyh@picnet.org) or 905-831-6265 extension 6233. Individuals may also provide feedback in person to library staff or in writing using paper comment forms. All feedback is monitored, tracked and responded to by public service staff, working with the relevant department. If a response is not immediately available, staff will confirm that the feedback has been received and indicate a timeline for response.

## **Emergency Preparedness**

In conjunction with the City of Pickering, the Library is responsible for ensuring that the community emergency planning and response activities incorporate emergency management practices that have the greatest impact on meeting the needs of people with disabilities.

For further information, please contact Kathy Williams, Director of Public Services, at 905-831-6265 extension 6251 or [kathyw@picnet.org](mailto:kathyw@picnet.org). If the contact people listed in this document are unavailable, Kathy Williams also serves as an alternate contact. Please do not hesitate to contact her.