



SUBJECT: Accessible Customer Service		POLICY NUMBER: BD-1070
EFFECTIVE DATE: January 28, 2013	REPLACES ISSUE OF: January 1, 2012	PAGE : 1      OF: 7
APPROVED BY: Board of Directors		

**1.0 PURPOSE:**

Patricia Region Senior Services Inc. is committed to being responsive to the needs of all tenants and clients.

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines on providing goods and services to people with disabilities that will facilitate accessibility.

This policy establishes accessibility standards for customer services in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and in keeping with *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulations 429/07*.

**2. DEFINITIONS:**

a) Assistive Devices

Devices used to assist people with disabilities in carrying out activities.

Devises used to assist people with disabilities in accessing the service of people or organizations.

Devices include, but are not limited to: wheelchairs, reading machines, recording machines, hearing devices, devices for grasping, or a white cane.

b) Barrier

As defined by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, barrier means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy, procedure or a practice.

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c) Disability

Disability as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the Ontario Human Right Code is:

- *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, included diabetes, mellitus, epilepsy, and brain injury, and any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device, a condition of mental impairment or a development disability,*
- *A learning disability, or a 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.*

d) Service Animals

A service animal is defined as either:

- i) a “guide dog” as defined in *Section 1* of the *Blind Persons Right Act*
- ii) a “service animal” for a person with a disability:
  - a) if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for the reasons relating to his or her disability, or
  - b) if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability

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e) Support Person

A support person is defined as another person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help them with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

**3.0 POLICY:**

a) Assistive Devices:

- i) People with disabilities may choose to use their own personal assistive devices, and will be allowed to do so, unless there is a defined risk associated with that use.
- ii) Should a person with a disability be unable to access service through the use of their own personal assistive device, PRSS Inc. will assess service delivery and potential service options to meet the needs of the individual.
- iii) Employees, third party contractors and others who provide service to tenants and clients will be familiar with the assistive devices and other accessibility supports at Patricia Gardens that will increase the accessibility of our services to people with disabilities.

b) Service Animals

- i) PRSS Inc. acknowledges the vital relationship and dependency which exists between a person with disabilities and their service animal. People with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal are permitted on the parts of the premises that are open to the public and other third parties.
- ii) Public areas of Patricia Gardens include common areas such as lobby, laundry facilities recreational facilities, building office, common eating areas, meeting rooms, etc. Service animals are not permitted where food preparation is being undertaken and utility rooms; or as otherwise disallowed by law.
- iii) The tenant, client or customer when accompanied by a service animal will be allowed to enter the premises with the animal and keep the animal with him or her at all times, unless the animal is excluded by law from the premises.

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iv) The tenant or client is responsible for the care, supervision and control of their service animal while on the premises.

c) Support Persons

i) People with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person, have the right to have access to their support person while accessing goods and services of PRSS Inc.

ii) If confidential information is going to be discussed, the person with the disability should be asked if they prefer their support person to remain present. If the support person is present when confidential information is to be disclosed, signed consent must be received from the person with the disability. A signed confidentiality agreement should also be obtained from the support person.

iii) If PRSS Inc. charges an admission fee in connection with a support person's presence at an event or function or for a service, PRSS Inc. shall post a notice, providing information in advance about the amount, if any, that is payable by the support person accompanying a person with a disability.

iv ) PRSS Inc. may request that a person with a disability be accompanied by a support person, in the event that it is considered necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises.

This will only occur after consultation with the person with a disability and when it is the only means to allow the person with a disability to access the organizations goods or services.

The following criteria shall be used in consulting with the tenant or client:

- a) When the risk is greater than the risk associated with other tenants/clients;
- b) When there is a clear and significant risk to the health and safety of the person with a disability or others;
- c) When the risk cannot be eliminated or reduced by other means;
- d) When the assessment of the risk is based on consideration of the nature and severity of the potential harm, the duration of the risk, the likelihood that the potential harm will occur and how imminent the potential risk is;

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e) When the assessment of risk is based on the person's actual characteristics, not on perceived risk that is based on generalizations, misconceptions or fears about a disability.

d) Notice of Service Disruptions

i) If there is a temporary disruption in the availability of services and facilities used by individuals with disabilities (e.g., temporary loss of elevator service), Patricia Gardens will notify the public of the reason for the disruption, the date(s) of disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available.

ii) The notice may be provided by a variety of methods, depending on the circumstances, and may include:

- postings in conspicuous places at the affected premises (for example, common areas by the elevator, next to the elevator on the main floor),
- by email,
- by Patricia Gardens website ([www.drydenseniorservices.ca](http://www.drydenseniorservices.ca)),
- other means that will ensure that the notice reaches those persons potentially affected by the temporary disruption.

iv) If the disruption is anticipated, a reasonable amount of advance notice of the disruption will be provided.

v) If the disruption is unexpected, notice will be provided as soon as possible.

e) Feedback

i) Patricia Region Senior Services is committed to providing high quality customer service and wants to continue to enhance and improve the accessibility of our service to our clients, tenants, applicants for housing, visitors, volunteers, individuals in the community who use our facilities, and other members of the public with disabilities.

ii) A process to receive feedback on the provision of goods and services to individuals with disabilities accessing services at Patricia Gardens has been established. This process enables people to provide feedback either in person, by telephone, in writing, by email, online, on disk or by another method.

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iii) A "Feedback Form" can be filled on our website ([www.drydenseniorservices.ca](http://www.drydenseniorservices.ca)), downloaded in accessible formats from the website, or a copy of the form can be picked up in at the office. The feedback form is available in alternate formats when requested.

iv) A response to feedback received is not mandatory. If a person who submits feedback requests a response and provides contact information, PRSS Inc will follow-up with the individual in the format in which the feedback was received, within (10) ten working days. All feedback will be kept in the strictest confidence and will be used to improve customer service.

#### d) Training

i) All individuals who interact and deal with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of PRSS Inc. as an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise shall be required to receive training on providing customer service to people with disabilities.

ii) The Program Coordinator shall ensure that employees and volunteers who deal with the public on behalf of PRSS Inc. and employees who are involved in agency policy development, program development, directing, monitoring policies, or evaluating policies receive training on accessible customer service.

iv) All third party contractors who deal with the public on behalf of PRSS Inc. shall ensure that their employees, agents, subcontractors, etc. receive training in accordance with this policy and the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07* and, upon request, shall provide the training records to PRSS Inc..

vi) Employee, volunteer and third party contractor training will include a review of the purposes of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c11* and the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*, the requirements of this policy, and instruction about the following matters:

- a) How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disability;
- b) How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person;
- c) How to use equipment or devices available on Patricia Gardens premises or otherwise made available by the housing provider that may help with the delivery of goods or services to a person with a disability; and

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- d) What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing Patricia Gardens' goods or services;
- e) PRSS Inc. policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities.

vii) The training can be provided through handouts attending an orientation session, in a classroom setting, by video or through other formats.

viii) Training will be provided to each person as soon as practical after he or she is assigned the applicable duties. Training will also be provided on an ongoing basis in connection with changes to applicable legislation, and/or organizational policies, procedures and practices governing the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities.

ix) As required, by *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*, PRSS Inc. will log and maintain records which will record the details of the training provided, as well as the name of the person, location, and date the training was completed.



## Request for Accessible Customer Service Documentation in an Alternative Format

We are committed to providing information in the format that meets your needs. If you need information in an alternate format, please use this form and let us know what format will work for you. Alternatively, you can visit or call the building office to make a request.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town: Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number/ TTY Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Document(s) Required: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Additional Description of Document(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Format Requested: e.g. Large Print, html, electronic text on disk or as email attachment, audio, etc. (please indicate any specific technical needs.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date information is required: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to: Administration  
Patricia Gardens  
35 Van Horne Avenue  
P8N-3B4





## **Meeting the Accessible Customer Service Needs of Tenants, Visitors and Public**

We are committed to meeting and responding to the customer service needs of all our tenants, applicants, visitors and members of the public including people with disabilities.

Find out more about our commitment to accessible customer service policies, practices and procedures and our requirements under the customer service standard can be viewed online or downloaded in WORD or PDF format for review at [www.drydenseniorservices.ca](http://www.drydenseniorservices.ca). Documents also are available upon request from the Administration office Patricia Gardens.

If you require these documents in an alternative format, a request form is available at the Administration office at Patricia Gardens or on our website.