

Accessible Customer Service Policy

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this Policy and its associated procedures is to ensure ESA customer services are accessible to members of the public and other third parties with disabilities.

2.0 Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all employees of ESA, and anyone with the authority to act on behalf of the ESA.

2.2 Nothing in this Policy diminishes in any way, ESA's legal obligations with respect to persons with disabilities which are otherwise imposed by law.

3.0. Objective

The objectives of this Policy are to:

3.1 ensure compliance with the customer accessibility requirements set out under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and Regulation 429/07 ("AODA");

3.2 provide transparency on how ESA provides accessibility for persons with disabilities in its customer service activities;

3.3 guide decision-making and actions by ESA employees in relation to customer services provided to persons with disabilities, by identifying principles and requirements to be followed in such decision-making and actions; and

3.4 identify the accountability structure at ESA for developing, undertaking, and monitoring accessible customer service activities.

4.0 Policy Content

4.1. Principles

The following general principles shall guide ESA in its provision of services to members of the public and other third parties:

4.1.1 ESA services must be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;

4.1.2 The provision of services to persons with disabilities and others shall be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable persons with disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from ESA services; and

4.1.3 Persons with disabilities must be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use, and benefit from ESA services.

4.2. Requirements in the Provision of Services to Persons with Disabilities

ESA is committed to excellence in serving all members of the public and third parties. To ensure excellence in customer service to persons with disabilities, ESA shall comply with the following:

4.2.1 Communication

ESA shall communicate with persons with disabilities in ways that take into account their disabilities.

4.2.2 Telephone Services

ESA shall provide a fully accessible telephone service to members of the public and other third parties with disabilities accessing customer services from ESA.

4.2.3 Assistive Devices

ESA shall facilitate service to persons with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use, or benefit from ESA services.

4.2.4 Use of Service Animals

ESA shall permit persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal to bring such service animal to parts of ESA premises that are open to the public, and to keep the service animal with him or her at all times, unless the animal is excluded from the premises by another law. In accordance with ESA's associated procedures, if a service animal is excluded by law from the premises, the ESA shall ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use, or benefit from ESA's services.

4.2.5 Use of Support Person

Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person to ESA's premises that are open to the public will be allowed to enter with his or her support person.

At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on any ESA premises open to the public.

4.3 Communications

4.3.1 General

ESA shall make this Policy available to members of the public and third parties.

4.3.2 Requests for Access to Service, Complaints and Feedback

ESA shall make contact information available to the public for the purpose of ensuring persons with disabilities have access to ESA services and the ESA customer service complaint and feedback system.

4.3.3. Notice of Temporary Disruption

In accordance with associated procedures, members of the public and other third parties will have access to notice in the event of a disruption to the services and/or state of ESA facilities that would affect the ability of persons with disabilities to access ESA's services.

4.3.4. Training for Employees

In accordance with ESA's associated procedures, ESA shall provide training to all employees who regularly deal with members of the public or other third parties on ESA's behalf, and all those who

are involved in the development and/or monitoring of policies and procedures governing the provision of services to members of the public or third parties.

5.0 Legislative Authority

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c.11
 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07
 Building Code Act, 1992 S.O. c.23
 Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19

6.0 Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

ESA’s General Counsel will regularly review and monitor this Policy to ensure that it remains current, relevant, and effective in meeting its purpose and objectives.

7.0 Interpretation

For purposes of this policy, unless otherwise stated, the following definitions shall apply:

Term	Definition
AODA	Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c.11 and Ontario Regulation 429/07.
Assistive Devices	Auxiliary aids such as communications aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids (e.g. canes, crutches, wheelchairs or hearing aids).
Disability	Includes (as per the definition in the <i>Ontario Human Rights Code</i>): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, 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 on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device; • a condition of mental impairment; • 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.
ESA	Electrical Safety Authority
Persons with Disabilities	Individuals who have a disability as defined under the Ontario Human Rights Code
Support Person	Any person, whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member, or friend, who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communications, personal care or medical needs or access to services.
Service Animal	An animal used for the benefit of a person with a disability for reasons relating to his or her disability.