

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA) – Customer Service Policy

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of the Customer Service Standards included in the Integrated Accessibility Standards under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. It applies to the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties, not to the goods themselves.

Nicholson and Cates Limited is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities.

All goods and services provided by Nicholson & Cates shall follow the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

The following is an outline of Nicholson and Cates' commitment to ensure compliance with the AODA standards. Upon request, we will provide a copy of this document in an alternative accessible format.

Assistive devices

People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our goods, services or facilities.

In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access our goods, services or facilities.

Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take in to account their disability. We will work with the person with a disability to determine what method of communication works for them.

Service animals

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public.

A service animal can be easily identified through visual indicators, such as when it wears a harness or a vest, or when it helps the person perform certain tasks.

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used by the customer or partner for reasons relating to his or her disability, Nicholson & Cates may request verification from them.

If service animals are prohibited by another law, there is a health and safety concern due to an allergy for example, or the service animal is unable to be controlled on our premises, we will do the following to ensure people with disabilities can access our goods, services or facilities:

- explain why the animal is excluded
- discuss with the customer another way of providing goods, services or facilities

Support persons

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises.

Notice of temporary disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities Nicholson and Cates will notify customers promptly. This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Training

Nicholson and Cates Limited will provide accessible customer service training to all employees or anyone involved in developing our policies.

Training will include:

- purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard
- Nicholson and Cates' policies related to the customer service standard
- how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- how to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Nicholson and Cates' goods, services or facilities

Staff will also be trained when changes are made to our accessible customer service policies.

New staff members will be trained during the onboarding process.

Feedback process

Nicholson and Cates welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Customer feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns.

All feedback, including complaints, will be taken into account and responded to.

Nicholson and Cates will make sure our feedback process is accessible to people with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports, on request.

Modifications to this or other policies

Any policies of Nicholson and Cates Limited that do not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be modified or removed.