

## **ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY**

### **Providing goods, services or facilities to people with disabilities.**

Sharp Bus Lines Limited is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code respecting non-discrimination.

Sharp Bus Lines Limited understands that obligations under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* and its accessibility standards do not substitute or limit its obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code or obligations to people with disabilities under any other law.

Sharp Bus Lines Limited is committed to complying with both the *Ontario Human Rights Code* and the *AODA*.

Sharp Bus Lines Limited is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities.

Our accessible customer service policies are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

### **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.

We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices we have on site or that we provide that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods, services or facilities.

### **Communication**

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. This may include the following:

- Auditory – reading the written information aloud to the person directly or over the phone; repeating, clarifying or restating information where required
- Visual – hand-written or typed information; captioning or audio descriptions on videos
- Gestures, diagrams, demonstrations
- Communication through a third party (support person)

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.

When we cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, our staff may ask a person to provide documentation (template, letter or form) from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

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.

A regulated health professional is defined as a member of one of the following colleges:

- College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario
- College of Chiropractors of Ontario
- College of Nurses of Ontario
- College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario
- College of Optometrists of Ontario
- College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
- College of Physiotherapists of Ontario
- College of Psychologists of Ontario
- College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario

If service animals are prohibited by another law, 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.

## **Training**

Sharp Bus Lines Limited will provide accessible customer service training to:

- all employees and volunteers
- anyone involved in developing our policies
- anyone who provides goods, services or facilities to customers on our behalf.

Staff will be trained on accessible customer service within 7-days after being hired for full-time employees, and prior to being hired for part-time drivers and monitors.

Training will include:

- purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard
- Sharp Bus Lines' 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
- how to use the equipment or devices available on-site or otherwise that may help with providing goods, services or facilities to people with disabilities. These include:
  - Q-Straint securement
  - Wheelchair lift
  - Harnesses, booster seats, car seats
  - Mini-bus training, where applicable
- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Sharp Bus Lines' goods, services or facilities

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

## **Feedback process**

Sharp Bus Lines Limited welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Customer feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns.

Customers will be notified of how to provide feedback in the following ways:

- Posted on website

Customers who wish to provide feedback on the way Sharp Bus Lines Limited provides goods, services or facilities to people with disabilities can provide feedback in the following way(s):

- Online Customer Service Feedback form
- Phoning a divisional manager
- Writing a letter or email to a divisional manager

All feedback, including complaints, will be handled in the following manner:

- Feedback is directed to divisional manager, regional manager
- Concerns are responded to within 4-hours, during business hours
- Concerns are documented and followed up in the preferred method of the individual

Customers can expect to hear back in 1 business day from receiving feedback.

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

**Notice of availability of documents**

Sharp Bus Lines Limited will notify the public that documents related to accessible customer service, are available upon request by posting a notice in the following location(s)/way(s):

- Posted on website

Sharp Bus Lines Limited will provide this document in an accessible format or with communication support, on request. We will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the format or communication support. We will provide the accessible format in a timely manner and, at no additional cost.

**Modifications to this or other policies**

Any policies of Sharp Bus Lines 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.