

POLICY ON ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

SUBJECT Accessible Customer Service and Customer Care

REVISION DATE August 29, 2014

APPROVED BY The Hanen Centre, Board of Directors

1.0 CUSTOMER CARE

- a) All employees are expected to treat Hanen's customers ('customers' includes Hanen's members) with courtesy and respect at all times.
- b) From time to time, Hanen will have to deal with difficult customers. In such circumstances, employees shall maintain high standards of professionalism and fairness. Rudeness to our customers is not acceptable in any circumstances.
- c) Employees should be aware of and work to any service standards applicable to their area of responsibility.
- d) Employees' general actions, behaviour and demeanor while at work should be such as to present Hanen as a professional and effective organization. Employees should avoid any action that might imply a sloppy or uncaring attitude.

2.0 ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

2.1 Purpose

The Hanen Centre is committed to being responsive to the needs of all members and customers. We strive to provide quality goods, services and training that are accessible to all. The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines on providing goods, services and training to people with disabilities that will facilitate accessibility. This policy establishes accessibility standards for customer service in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and in keeping with *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*.

The Hanen Centre will make reasonable efforts to ensure policies, practices and procedures and the delivery of goods, services and training provided to persons with disabilities and all our members/customers are in keeping with the principles of dignity, equity/equality of outcome, independence and integration, and we will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability and communication needs.

2.2 Definitions

Assistive Devices

'Devices' are anything used to assist persons with disabilities in carrying out activities or in accessing the services of persons or organizations covered by the customer service standard. Assistive devices include, but are not limited to, wheelchairs, reading machines, recording machines, hearing devices, devices for grasping, a white cane.

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.

'Disability', as defined by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the *Ontario Human Rights 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, 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, 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 developmental 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*.

Service Animals

For the purpose of this policy, a 'service animal' is defined as either:

- (i) A "guide dog," as defined in Section 1 of the *Blind Persons Rights' Act*; or
- (ii) A "service animal" for a person with a disability. For the purpose of this policy, an animal is 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.

Support Person

For the purpose of this policy, a support person is defined as another person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help him or her with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

3.0 POLICY

3.1 Assistive Devices

- a) People with disabilities may choose to use their own personal assistive devices, while accessing goods, services and training. The Hanen Centre acknowledges the importance of these devices and will allow people with disabilities to use their own personal assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from the services offered by The Hanen Centre, unless there is a defined risk associated with that use.
- b) Should a person with a disability be unable to access The Hanen Centre services through the use of their own personal assistive device, The Hanen Centre will assess service delivery and potential service options to meet the needs of the individual.
- c) The Hanen Centre staff, third party contractors and others who provide service to members/customers will be familiar with the assistive devices and other accessibility supports at The Hanen Centre that will increase the accessibility of our services to people with disabilities.

3.2 Service Animals

- a) The Hanen Centre acknowledges the vital relationship and dependency which exists between a person with disabilities and their service animal. The Hanen Centre is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of the premises that are open to visitors and other third parties.
- b) Visiting areas of our premises include common areas such as lobby, office, and meeting rooms. Service animals are not permitted where food preparation is being undertaken or as otherwise disallowed by law.
- c) The member/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.
- d) The member/customer is responsible for the care, supervision and control of their service animal while on the premises.

3.3 Support Persons

- a) The Hanen Centre is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. People with disabilities have the right to have access to their support person while accessing the goods, services and training of The Hanen Centre.
- b) 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.

- c) The Hanen Centre 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 Hanen Centre's goods, services and training. The following criteria shall be used in consulting with the member/customer:
- (i) When the risk is greater than the risk associated with other members/customers;
 - (ii) When there is a clear and significant risk to the health and safety of the person with a disability or others;
 - (iii) When the risk cannot be eliminated or reduced by other means;
 - (iv) 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;
 - (v) 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.

3.4 Notice of Service Disruptions

- a) If there is a temporary disruption in the availability of services and facilities used by members/customers with disabilities (e.g., temporary loss of elevator service), The Hanen Centre will notify all concerned of the reason for the disruption, the date(s) of disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities/services and training, if any, that are available.
- b) This 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 e-mail, on The Hanen Centre website www.hanen.org, as well as by other means that will ensure that the notice reaches those persons potentially affected by the temporary disruption.
- c) If the disruption is anticipated, a reasonable amount of advance notice of the disruption will be provided. If the disruption is unexpected, notice will be provided as soon as possible.

3.5 Feedback

- a) The Hanen Centre is committed to providing high quality customer service and will continue to enhance and improve the accessibility of our customer service to our customers, visitors and members who use our facilities, and other members of the public with disabilities.

- b) A process to receive feedback on the provision of goods and services to members/customers with disabilities accessing services at The Hanen Centre has been established. This process enables people to provide feedback either in person, in writing, by telephone, by e-mail, or by another method.
- c) A Feedback Form is available on our website and can be downloaded [here](#). This form can also be requested by contacting our office (visit, write, call, or e-mail info@hanen.org).
- d) Responses to feedback received are not mandatory. If a person who submits feedback requests a response and provides contact information, The Hanen Centre will follow up with the individual within two working days in the format in which the feedback was received. All feedback will be kept in the strictest confidence and will be used to improve customer service.

3.6 Training

- a) All individuals who interact and deal with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of The Hanen Centre, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise, shall be required to receive training on providing customer service to people with disabilities.
- b) The Hanen Centre shall ensure that employees who deal with the public on behalf of The Hanen Centre, and those who are involved in The Hanen Centre policy and program development and/or in directing, monitoring or evaluating policies, receive training on accessible customer service.
- c) All third party contractors who deal with the public or other third parties on behalf of The Hanen Centre 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 The Hanen Centre.
- d) The Hanen Centre employee 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:
 - (i) How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disability;
 - (ii) 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;
 - (iii) What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing The Hanen Centre goods, services or training;
 - (iv) The Hanen Centre's policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods, services and training to persons with disabilities.
- e) Accessibility standards customer service training at The Hanen Centre will be provided by the utilization of an e-learning course found on the Ministry of

Community and Social Services website, "Serve-ability: Transforming Ontario's Customer Service", <http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/serve-ability/splash.html>.

- f) The Hanen Centre will provide the link to the e-learning course to each employee/contractor as soon as practicable after he or she is hired. 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.
- g) As required by *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*, The Hanen Centre 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.