

PETERBOROUGH UTILITIES GROUP

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

Reference File: H00

POLICY

The Peterborough Utilities Group (PUG) is committed to providing its services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of all customers. We are committed to providing people with disabilities equal opportunity to access our services and allow them to benefit from the same services in a similar way as other customers.

PURPOSE

PUG is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

1. Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. We will train staff who communicate with customers on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

2. Telephone services

We are committed to providing fully accessible telephone service to our customers. We will train staff to communicate with customers over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly.

We will offer to communicate with customers by other means of communication that apply, (e.g. email, TTY, relay services) if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

3. Assistive devices

PUG will permit a person with a disability to use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from services. We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our services.

4. Use of service animals

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties. We will also ensure that all staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

PUG may request documentation from a health care practitioner if it is not readily apparent that a person uses an animal for reasons related to their disability. Alternate service options will be offered where service animals are restricted by law or in the case of an allergic reaction from a member of the public or staff.

5. Use of support persons

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter PUG's premises 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 our premises.

Fees will not be charged for support persons for admission to the Riverview Park & Zoo train ride. Customers will be informed of this by a notice that will be posted on PUG's web site.

6. Notice of temporary disruption

PUG will provide customers with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services that could affect people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

7. Accessible Customer Service Training

PUG will provide training to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies, practices and procedures within the first month of commencing their duties.

Training will include the following:

- A review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of 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 PUG services
- PUG's policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard.

Applicable staff will be trained on policies and practices that affect the way services are provided to people with disabilities. Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies and practices. Training records will be maintained.

8. Feedback process

PUG welcomes feedback from the public about the delivery of services to people with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being

met are welcome and appreciated.

A Customer Feedback Form is available (Appendix A) to be used if desired.

Feedback regarding the way PUG provides services to people with disabilities can be made by contacting the Director, Customer & Corporate Services using one of the following methods:

P.O. Box 4125, Peterborough, ON K9J 6Z5
Telephone: 705-748-9301 ext. 1222
Email: info@peterboroughutilities.ca

PUG will assess whether a response to feedback is necessary and if so, ensure a response is provided.

9. Modifications to this or other policies

We are committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities.

Any policy of PUG that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

REFERENCES:

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_05a11_e.htm

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07)
http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_070429_e.htm

John Stephenson
President & CEO

Appendix A

**Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
Customer Feedback Form**

Thank you for contacting or visiting Peterborough Utilities Group (PUG). We value all of our customers and strive to meet everyone's needs.

Please tell us the date and time of your contact with PUG:

Did we respond to your customer service needs today? YES NO

Was our customer service provided to you in an accessible manner?

YES SOMEWHAT NO (please explain below)

Did you have any problems accessing our services?

YES (please explain below) SOMEWHAT (please explain below) NO

Please add any other comments you may have:

Contact information (optional)*:

Thank you.

Management
Peterborough Utilities Group

***Please note:** There may be privacy implications for organizations collecting personal information. Providers should seek their own legal advice regarding the privacy implications of collecting personal information in this manner.