

Financial Services Commission of Ontario Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 Customer Service Policy

This policy outlines the Financial Services Commission of Ontario's commitment to not only meet the requirements of the customer service standard, established in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, but also to foster additional good practices that go beyond the minimum requirements.

Note that this policy may be revised as other standards are introduced under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities

Our Mandate and Vision:

The Financial Services Commission of Ontario (FSCO), an agency of the Ministry of Finance, has a mandate to provide regulatory services that protect the public interest and enhance public confidence in the regulated sectors. FSCO's vision is to be a progressive and fair regulator working with its stakeholders to support a strong financial services sector.

Our Commitment:

In fulfilling our mission, FSCO strives at all times to provide its goods and services and conduct its business for both the public and staff in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to providing people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our goods and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other customers.

FSCO is committed to having trained staff to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.

Assistive Devices:

FSCO is committed to excellence in serving persons with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services.

FSCO will ensure that staff is trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods or services.

FSCO will endeavour to provide assistive devices or technology to persons with disabilities who will be attending scheduled viewings, hearings or meetings. Notification of the requested device or technology will be included in the scheduling documentation.

FSCO will also ensure that trained staff are equipped to provide or accommodate assistive devices available on our premises for customers i.e: wheelchairs, accessible public computer terminal, distress pendant/alarm notification system.

FSCO has established comprehensive procedures for emergency preparedness for people with disabilities/ special needs. These procedures include an evacuation assistance self-identification protocol for staff and evacuation procedures for visitors to FSCO.

Communication:

FSCO will communicate with persons with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. This means staff will communicate in a means that enables persons with disabilities to communicate effectively for purposes of using, receiving and requesting FSCO goods, services and facilities. These means may include communicating with customers by written correspondence, email, FSCO's website, TTY, relay services or in person, if telephone communication is not suitable to the person's communication needs.

FSCO is committed to providing fully accessible service to our customers, and will train front-line staff to communicate with customers in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly.

Billing:

FSCO is committed to providing accessible invoices and or receipts to all of our customers. For this reason, invoices and receipts will be provided in the following formats upon request: hard copy, large print, e-mail or Braille.

FSCO will respond to any questions customers may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone or email.

Use of Service Animals and Support Persons:

FSCO is 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. FSCO 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.

FSCO is 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 FSCO'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 FSCO's premises.

Notice of Temporary Disruption:

FSCO will provide customers with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, how long the disruption is expected to last, and a description of any alternative facilities or services, if they are available.

The notice will be placed at all FSCO's reception areas and service counters. Depending on the nature of the disruption, notice will also be provided on outgoing telephone and TTY messages and on FSCO's website.

Training for Staff:

FSCO will provide ongoing customer service training to all employees, students, interns and contract staff. Those staff who are involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies, practices and procedures and identified staff who are directly involved with providing goods and services to the public on a day-to-day basis will receive extended training.

Customer service training will be provided as part of FSCO's orientation training for new staff and will be completed by the first month after staff commence their duties.

Customer service training will include the following:

- The purpose 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
- How to use assistive devices e.g. TTY, wheelchair lifts, etc., available on FSCO's premises
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing FSCO's goods and services
- FSCO's policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard.

FSCO will ensure that organizations providing services on its behalf undertake training in accessible customer service, as outlined above.

Feedback Process:

The ultimate goal of this policy is to meet service delivery expectations while serving customers with disabilities. Comments on FSCO's services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way FSCO provides goods and services to people with disabilities may be made by e-mail, letter, phone, in person; or via the feedback card that is available on-line, or in hard copy by request or in person or in another format that better meets the person's communication needs.

All feedback will be directed to the Manager, Service Excellence and Organizational Effectiveness. Where possible, complaints will be addressed immediately. However, some complaints may require more investigation and may take longer to respond.

In accordance with the OPS Common Service Standards, customers can expect acknowledgement of verbal/telephone feedback, or feedback left on a comment card, within two business days, and within fifteen business days of the receipt of a mailed/e-mailed complaint. The acknowledgement will indicate when the matter will be addressed and when the customer will be notified. FSCO will follow up with any required action within the timeframe noted in the acknowledgement. Feedback/response must endeavour to be in a format that is accessible to the complainant.

Modifications to this or Other Policies:

FSCO is committed to ensuring that its customer service policies, practices and procedures respect and promote the dignity and independence of all persons with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on persons with disabilities.

Any FSCO operational policy affecting customer service that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities will be modified or revoked.

Questions About this Policy:

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to customers with disabilities. If anyone wishes to receive a copy of the policy or has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of this policy is not understood, please contact:

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