

<b>PSF-053 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy</b>	<b>Areas Involved:</b> All Locations
<b>Approved By:</b> Terry O'Reilly	<b>Review/Revision Date:</b> 2021

With the implementation of Ontario Regulation 429-07 for “Accessibility Standards for Customer Care Service”, O’Reilly Brothers Limited is committed to ensuring compliance for our employees with our Accessible Customer Service Policy and training. This means that O’Reilly Brothers Ltd. seeks to understand people’s disabilities and their varying needs when it comes to “Accessible Customer Service”.

We are conforming to the legislated “Customer Service Standard” meant for all organizations with one or more employees in Ontario and provide goods or services directly to the public or indirectly by means to other organizations in Ontario (third parties).

### **“Disability” Defined**

Any degree of physical, infirmity, amputation, malformation, disfiguration, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness, muteness or speech impediment caused by bodily injury, paralysis, birth defect or illness. This also includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, brain injuries or a physical reliance on a service assistant, wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device. Disabilities can be visible but are often not; they can also come and go which affects how a person functions at different times.

### **Feedback is Welcome**

In our evolving world feedback is the key to progress. We welcome feedback from everyone we interact with, be it employee or client which can be done through phone, email or letter:

Phone: 613-224-1677

Email: [info@oreillybrothers.com](mailto:info@oreillybrothers.com)

Mail: 55 Capital Drive, Nepean, ON K2G 0E7

### **Ways we Provide Accessible Customer Service**

We strive to interact and communicate with all people in the most convenient fashion required which includes the following:

- We answer calls 24/7. During the day our office administrative staff answer calls and after hours and on weekends we have an on-call message centre.
- Our staff training includes Accessible Customer Service.
- We welcome feedback by phone, email and mail.
- We respond to online comments from social media.
- All our company vehicles have a note pad and paper for alternate communication.
- We accept payment in any form convenient to a client which includes going to their home to pick up a cheque.
- We aim to provide outstanding customer service by being sensitive and compassionate to people with various disabilities and the extent of a person’s disability. We do this through open communication by responding to our customers’ needs and when uncertain about how to approach a person asking them respectfully how we can best meet their needs. This is explained in the following sections:
  - People with Physical Disabilities
  - People with Vision Loss
  - People with Service Animals
  - People with Hearing Loss
  - People with Multiple Disabilities

- People with Speech or Language Disabilities
- People with Learning Disabilities
- People with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities
- People with Mental Health Disabilities

### ***People with Physical Disabilities***

Physical disabilities and injuries aren't always obvious so it is important to follow the below cues or ask how we could better serve someone when we see they are having difficulty walking, talking or moving in general:

- Sit down to make eye contact if you are having a long conversation with someone on crutches, in a wheelchair or scooter.
- Unless given permission do "not" touch the person or their equipment (i.e. cane, wheelchair and scooter).
- Following up on the above permission, common sense dictates to be sure the person is not left in an unwanted position (i.e. positions that are dangerous, awkward or undignified such as facing a wall or in the way of opening doors).

### ***People with Vision Loss***

Vision loss does not mean that a person cannot see so it is important to address the person directly and be sensitive to their ability see hazards, landmarks or to read by asking if they need help. While some customers may use a guide dog, others may not. Follow the below guidelines for someone who may have vision loss:

- As mentioned, people may still have some sight even though they have vision loss so it is important to "not" assume that person cannot see you.
- When speaking, identify yourself, speak directly to the person and ask if your help is needed.
- You can ask for their consent if they want to be guided by offering your arm/elbow.
- If a person has an animal with them and you're not sure if it's a service animal, ask the person to clarify.
- It is important not to touch or address a service animal (i.e. guide dog) since it is not a pet but a service animal.
- If the person is accommodated by someone address the person directly not who they are accommodated by.

### ***People with Service Animals***

Although our Head Office is not open to the public due to construction safety, when necessary, we welcome working with people with disabilities and their service animals on our premises while conforming to safety on site requirements.

- If an animal is not easily identified as a service animal our staff might ask a person for regulated health professional documentation confirming that person requires the service animal relating to their disability.
- Notice a service animal's identification by its harness, vest or how it helps the person with tasks.

### ***People with Hearing Loss***

As with all disabilities hearing loss has varying degrees (i.e. deaf, deafened and hard of hearing). Also, it is important to recognize that a person could be oral deaf, which is when the person is unable to hear and prefer to talk instead of using sign language.

- When a person identifies as having hearing loss be sure they can see your face and read your lips by moving to a well-lit area.
- If you want to speak to the person with hearing loss it may be necessary to get their attention prior. This can be done by attracting their attention first by waving your hand otherwise give a gentle tap to the shoulder.
- When a person uses a hearing aid be sure the area is quiet and without background noise.
- When there is difficulty communicating ask if another communication method would be better, i.e. pen and paper.

### ***People with Deaf-Blind Disabilities***

People with deaf-blind disabilities can still have some level of hearing and vision but may be accompanied by a professional support person who aids with communication:

- Communication with a person who is deaf-blind may be done using assistance card notes but the person will provide direction on the best communication mode.
- Unless instructed to speak to the professional support person always address the person who is deaf-blind.

### ***People with Speech or Language Disabilities***

Some diseases and disabilities cause difficulty with a person's speech (pronunciation, slurring and stuttering). Communication boards and other assistive devices are used by some people with severe conditions.

- Never assume a person with any type of speech impairment has other disabilities.
- Ideally ask closed questions; questions which can be answered with a "Yes" or "No".
- Never interrupt or finish the person's sentence – patience is required and is appreciated.

### ***People with Learning Disabilities***

"Learning disabilities" are diverse and even within a disability there can be a variety of types (i.e. dyslexia have many types including visual, auditory and attention which affects how information is understood and remembered). Some things to remember are as follows:

- Patience goes a long way when communicating as a person with a learning disability may not respond because they don't understand or need more time to process information.
- It may not be obvious that a person has a learning disability but look for cues like difficulty reading.
- A person may need help reading and/or understanding information.
- When communicating keep it simple to prevent confusion and further complicating information.

### ***People with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities***

As with other disabilities "intellectual/developmental disabilities" are not always obvious. A person with these disabilities will have limitations on learning, communicating, doing daily physical activities and may prevent the person from living independently. Down syndrome is one such example and the following are guidelines to keep in mind:

- Treat the person with respect in both communications and body language.
- Use plain and simple language.
- Don't presume what a person can do, ask them if you have any doubt.

### ***People with Mental Health Disabilities***

Mental health disabilities also cover a diverse number of disorders and span a large range of severity and can affect a person's ability to communicate, concentrate and think clearly. Anxiety can be a side effect caused by panic disorders, phobias, mood swings and hallucinations. It may not be obvious a person has a disability so the following things can be done to ease interactions:

- Treat the person with respect and be considerate.
- Communicate in a calm, reassuring and confident manner.
- Ask what you can do to help when a person seems to be having a crisis.

Treating everyone with dignity and respect by being aware and prepared are great first steps in Accessible Customer Service; done in conjunction with the above guidelines allows everyone to be treated and served appropriately.