

## **AODA Customer Service Standard Policy**

Issued February 2, 2016

S.B. Simpson Group Inc. (SBSG) is committed to providing exceptional customer service to all customers in a way that is consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Policy is to outline how SBSG will provide accessible customer service in accordance to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) customer service standard.

### **PROCEDURES**

The AODA customer service standard will be taken into account when decisions are made pertaining to customer service to ensure practices are always inclusive of customer with disabilities.

SBSG will provide accessible customer service through training staff to:

- Provide effective communication to customers with disabilities
- Provide effective service to customers with assistive devices, service animals and support persons
- Welcome feedback from customers with disabilities

### **COMMUNICATION**

Our employees will communicate, either in person or on the telephone, with people with disabilities in ways that takes their disability into account. This could mean:

- Communicating with pen and paper
- Adjusting speaking style to use clear and plain language and to speak slowly or clearly
- Communicating using gestures
- Communicating by email

If an employee is unsure about how to communicate with a customer with a disability, they will ask the customer directly how they wish to be communicated with.

### **SERVICE**

#### **Assistive Devices**

An assistive device is any piece of equipment a person with a disability uses to help them with daily living. Some examples include: a wheelchair, a screen reader, a listening device, an oxygen tank or a cane. Our employees will offer to help customers with assistive devices should they require assistance while accessing our goods and services. For example, a customer with a cane being served at our service counter may require assistance in carrying their purchases to their vehicle.

## **Service Animals**

The most common type of service animal is a guide dog, however, other animals can be trained to help people with disabilities. Service animals can assist people with different disabilities such as people who are visually impaired or deaf and people who have seizures. We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are permitted on the parts of our premises that are open to the public. If an employee is unsure whether the animal is a pet or a service animal, a letter from a nurse or doctor stating the animal is needed because of a disability may be requested.

## **Support Persons**

A support person may be a paid attendant, volunteer, a family member or a friend. The support person might help a person with a disability with a variety of things from communicating to helping with mobility or medical needs. Employees will provide service to customers with a disability as well as their support person. When communicating with a customer with a disability who has a support person, employees will communicate directly with the customer with a disability, even if the support person is communicating on the customer's behalf.

## **TRAINING**

To ensure all employees are aware of how to comply with this Policy, they will be trained on the AODA Customer Service standard. New employees will be trained within three (3) months of hire.

Employees will be retrained if there are any changes to policies, practices and procedures related to the AODA's customer service standard or people with disabilities and/or as changes are made to SBSG policies, practices and procedures.

Employees will be trained on:

- The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the Standard for Customer Service
- How to serve customers with different kinds of disabilities
- How to serve customers who use assistive devices, service animals or a support person
- What to do when a customer with a disability needs help accessing goods or services
- This Policy

## **NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTION**

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers, SBSG will notify customers promptly. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. The notice will be placed in the service counter area at the affected branch location(s).

## **AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS AND FEEDBACK**

SBSG will notify the public that our documents related to accessible customer service are available upon request by posting a notice on our website. We will make reasonable efforts to respond to requests for documents in a timely manner.

SBSG welcomes feedback regarding this Policy. Feedback can be provided verbally in person or by telephone to any branch manager. Feedback may also be provided by email to [humanresources@sbsimpson.com](mailto:humanresources@sbsimpson.com) or by mail to S.B. Simpson Group Inc., 3210 Mainway, Burlington, ON, L7M 1A5.

Every effort will be made to respond to feedback when it is received. If it is not possible to respond immediately, a response will be given within two business days.