
HALDIMAND COUNTY

Report CEC-06-2023 Amendment to 2009-02 Accessible Customer Service Policy



For Consideration by Council in Committee on May 23, 2023

OBJECTIVE:

To amend Policy 2009-02 Accessible Customer Service with updated language that reflects current legislation under the Accessibility for Ontarians Disabilities Act (AODA).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report CEC-06-2023 Amendment to 2009-02 Accessible Customer Service Policy be received;
2. AND THAT Policy 2009-02 Accessible Customer Service be amended with changes reflected in Attachment 1 to Report CEC-06-2023.

Prepared by: Trish Cardwell, Manager, Customer Experience & Communications

Approved: Cathy Case, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) mandates that the municipality must implement policies that facilitate the regulations outlined within Ontario Regulation 429/07: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. In addition to legislated requirements, accessibility initiatives foster improved organizational culture and inclusive communities.

In 2009, Haldimand County adopted Policy 2009-02 Accessible Customer Service. Since its adoption, there have been updates to AODA legislation requiring some language changes within the policy.

BACKGROUND:

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) (Reference 1) mandates that the municipality must implement policies that facilitate the regulations outlined within Ontario Regulation 429/07: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Reference 2).

The Accessible Customer Service Standard, Ontario Regulation 429/07, was the first accessibility standard to be adopted under the authority of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. The standard applies to all organizations in Ontario with more than one employee that provide goods and services to the public. The Ontario law came into force on January 1, 2008 and states what the public and private sectors in Ontario must do to make the provision of their goods and services more accessible to people with disabilities.

In 2009, Haldimand County adopted Policy 2009-02 Accessible Customer Service (Reference 3). This policy includes information on assistive devices, the customer feedback process, notice of temporary

disruptions, provision of documents in alternative formats, the use of service animals and support persons, and accessible customer training.

On July 1, 2016, the AODA incorporated Accessible Customer Service Standard requirements into Ontario Regulation 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards (Reference 4) and revoked regulation 429/07. Requirements listed under the Customer Service Standard were also updated and amended at this time.

As identified in the Haldimand County Five Year Accessibility Plan 2023 to 2027 (Reference 5), staff and members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee have recommended an update to Policy 2009-02 to better reflect the updated requirements listed within the new regulations.

ANALYSIS:

In January of 2023, Council approved Report CEC-01-2023 Accessibility Plan 2023-2027 (Reference 6) which recommended staff review Policy 2009-02 with the Accessibility Advisory Committee and propose updates to reflect current AODA codes, standards, and practices.

Staff propose the following amendments be made to Policy 2009-02 as shown in Attachment 1:

- Replace Ontario Regulation 429/07: Accessible Customer Service Standard with Ontario Regulation 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards;
- Usage of gender neutral language ('their' versus 'his' or 'her');
- In service animal definition found in section 2.2 Definitions:
 - Expand definition to include visual indicators on the animal.
 - Replace words 'physician or nurse, or for a valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada' with 'Regulated Health Professional'.
 - Broaden the list of health professionals who regulate service animals.

Although the updates are straightforward, any policy amendments are required to be approved by Council.

FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Not applicable.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:

Not applicable.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: No

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: Yes

REFERENCES:

1. [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#)

2. [Ontario Regulation 429/07: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service](#)
3. [2009-02 Accessible Customer Service Policy](#)
4. [Ontario Regulation 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards](#)
5. [Haldimand County Five Year Accessibility Plan 2023 - 2027](#)
6. [Report CEC-01-2023 Accessibility Plan 2023-2027](#)

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Accessible Customer Service Policy with amendments