



Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

Accessible Customer Service Policy

Providing Services to People
with Disabilities

Introduction.....	3
What is the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)?.....	4
Definitions	6
RFRK Accessible Customer Service Standard Policy	8
Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities	8
Communication	8
Assistive Devices	8
Service Animals.....	8
Support Persons.....	8
Notice of Temporary Disruption	8
Training	9
Feedback Process.....	9
Notice of Availability.....	9
Modifications to This or Other Policies.....	9

Introduction

Ontario is the first province and one of the first jurisdictions in the world to enact specific legislation establishing a goal and time-frame for accessibility. It is also the first jurisdiction to legislate accessibility reporting and to establish standards so people with disabilities can participate more actively in their communities.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is the in Ontario that allows the government to develop specific standards of accessibility and to enforce them. The requirements to comply with the legislation are quite prescribed, particularly with regard to training of all staff and volunteers, and the development of policies and procedures.

This document provides information regarding the policies, procedures and training for the Customer Service Standard portion of the AODA. Specifically it includes:

- a review of the purpose of the AODA and the requirements of the Customer Service Standard;
- an overview of the requirements of the Customer Service Standard;
- information on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
- information on how to interact with people with disabilities who use assistive devices;
- information on how to interact with people with disabilities who require the assistance of a service animal;
- information on how to interact with people with disabilities who may be accompanied by a support person;
- information on what to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the Real Food for Real Kids services;

What is the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)?

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is a law in Ontario that allows the government to develop specific standards of accessibility and to enforce them.

The purpose of this Act is to benefit all Ontarians by developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities.

The standards require that we identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities in key areas of daily living. Barriers keep people with disabilities from fully participating in activities that most of us take for granted.

Why is Ontario working on the issue of increasing accessibility?

- 1 in 7 people in Ontario has a disability. That's almost 2 million Ontarians.
- By 2036 the number of Ontarians with disabilities will rise to 1 in 5 as people age.
- Increasing accessibility is good for everyone, including ensuring all Ontarians can access products and services.

In order to comply with the AODA, RFRK must:

- establish policies, practices and procedures on providing goods or services to people with disabilities;
- make reasonable efforts to ensure that policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity;
- have a policy dealing with people's use of their own assistive devices to access goods or services or any other measures the organization offers to enable an individual access the goods or services;
- communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account their disability;
- let people with disabilities bring their service animals onto the parts of the premises open to the public or other third parties, except where the animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises;
- let people with disabilities be accompanied by their support person while on the parts of the provider's premises open to the public or other third parties;
- provide notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities usually use are temporarily disrupted;
- train anyone who interacts with the public or other third parties on the behalf of RFRK on topics outlined in the Customer Service Standard;
- train anyone who is involved in developing policies, practices and procedures on topics outlined in the Customer Service Standard;
- establish a process for receiving and responding to feedback about the way the RFRK provides services to people with disabilities, including the actions to be taken if a complaint is received. The information about the process must be accessible and readily available to the public;

- document, in writing, all their policies, practices and procedures for providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities;
- let persons know that the documents are available upon request; and
- upon request, provide the documented information to a person with a disability in a format that takes into account their disability.

Definitions

Alternative Format: any other way of publishing information beyond traditional printing, i.e., large print, audio format, etc.

Assistive Device: an auxiliary aid such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids, i.e., canes, crutches, wheelchairs, hearing aids, etc.

Barrier: anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his/her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, or a policy or practice.

Customer: AODA uses the term “customer.” For use within RFRK, a customer may be a client, volunteer, visitor to the office, community member, or any person who has a disability and interacts, in some way, with RFRK. For purposes of this document, the individuals noted above will be referred to as “person” or a “person with a disability.”

Disability: AODA uses the same definition of disability found in the Ontario Human Rights Code:

- any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- a mental disorder; or
- an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 (“handicap”).

Guide Dog: a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having the qualifications prescribed by the regulations (Blind Persons’ Rights Act 1990 s1 (1)).

Persons with Disabilities: those individuals that are afflicted with a disability as defined under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Service Animal: an animal acting as a service animal for a person with a disability, if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his/her disability, or if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

Support Persons: any person, whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member or friend, who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communication, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

RFRK Accessible Customer Service Standard Policy

Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities

Real Food for Real Kids is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities.

Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. Staff will be trained on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities. When a request is made from a person with a disability for a document in a different format, discussion regarding what options are available will take place and be mutually agreed upon.

Assistive Devices

We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices we may have on site or that we provide that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods or services. RFRK will allow people to use their own personal assistive devices to access our services, unless otherwise prohibited by law.

Service Animals

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and in accordance with food safety regulations. If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal RFRK may ask the person for confirmation of the animal's status.

Support Persons

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises. As no fees are charged to individuals who come onto our premises support person will also not be charged. A support person may be required to sign a confidentiality form as per RFRK policies. Fees may be charged to support persons who wish to be enrolled in our lunch club program.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities Real Food for Real Kids will notify customers promptly. This clearly posted 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.

Services and/or facilities include: elevator, washrooms equipped for disabilities, entrances equipped for those with disabilities.

The notice will be made publicly available at the following locations: at the elevator, front door, at the reception desk, at the washroom affected, at the entrances affected.

Training

Real Food for Real Kids will provide accessible customer service training to employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on our behalf. Training will also be provided to people involved in the development of policies, plans, practices and procedures related to the provision of our goods and services.

All staff will be trained on Accessible Customer Service within 4 weeks after being hired.

Training will include:

- An overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard
- Real Food for Real Kids' plan related to 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 the equipment or devices available on-site or otherwise that may help with providing goods or services to people with disabilities. These include: elevator, washroom equipped for the disabled, access to the building.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Real Food for Real Kids' goods and services.
- When changes are made to our accessible customer service plan.

Feedback Process

Customers who wish to provide feedback on the way Real Food for Real Kids provides goods and services to people with disabilities can provide feedback in the following way(s):

- By email: talent.training@rfrk.com
- By mail: Talent & Training, 115 Saulter Street South, Toronto, ON, M4M 3K8
- In person: Real Food for Real Kids, 115 Saulter Street South, Toronto, ON, M4M 3K8
- By telephone: 416-410-5437 (ask for the Talent & Training Department)

All feedback, including complaints, will be directed to the Talent and Training Department. Customers can expect to hear back in 10 business days.

Notice of Availability

Real Food for Real Kids will notify the public that our documents related to accessible customer service, are available upon request by posting a notice on our website and at our reception.

Modifications to This or Other Policies

Any policy, practice or procedure of Real Food for Real Kids that does not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be modified or removed.