

1. Our mission

The mission of the Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton (SPRC) is to improve the quality of life of all citizens by engaging in activities, that will result in:

- Improved social policies and services
- Maximized access for all citizens to the opportunities afforded by society
- Effective citizen involvement in the continuing consideration of social issues

2. Our commitment

In fulfilling our mission, SPRC strives at all times to provide its goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving 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.

3. Providing goods and services to people with disabilities

SPRC is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

3.1 Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

We will train staff who communicate with customers on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

3.2 Telephone services

We are committed to providing fully accessible telephone service to our customers. We will train staff to communicate with customers over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly.

We will offer to communicate with customers by e-mail, relay service and print if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

3.3 Assistive devices

We are committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services. We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods or services.

We will also ensure that staff know how to use the following assistive devices available on our premises for customers: relay service.

CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY STATEMENT:

Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities

3.4 Billing

We are committed to providing accessible invoices to all of our customers. For this reason, invoices will be provided in the following formats upon request: minimum 12-15 font size upon request.

We will answer any questions customers may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone or e-mail.

4. Use of service animals and support persons

We are 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. We 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.

We are 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 the Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton, Community Action for Children Program and Immigrant Women's Centre 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 our premises. If there is a charge for an event, support person will not be charged.

5. Notice of temporary disruption

The Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton 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, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. A notice of disruption will be sent posted on e-mail, phone and website.

6. Training for staff

The SPRC will provide training to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies, practices and procedures. Individuals in the following positions will be trained: administrative assistant, executive assistant, financial administrator, social planner, senior planner, executive director, research assistant, community development worker, social planner assistant and all other employment contract.

This training will be provided upon hire and prior to staff commencing their duties.

CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY STATEMENT:

Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities

Training will include the following:

- The purposes 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.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing SPRC's goods and services.
- SPRC's policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard.

Applicable staff will be trained on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way goods and services are provided to people with disabilities. Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

7. Feedback process

The ultimate goal of the SPRC is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving customers with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way SPRC provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made by e-mail or verbally. All feedback will be directed to the Executive Director. Customers can expect to hear back within 10 days.

Complaints will be addressed according to complaint categories already established in our company's complaint management procedures.

8. Modifications to this or other policies

We are committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities.

Any policy of SPRC that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

9. Questions about this policy

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to customers with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of a policy is not understood, an explanation should be provided by, or referred to, the Executive Director or in case of his or her absence, the Acting Executive Director of the Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton