

## **1. Purpose / Background Information**

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (the "AODA") is a Provincial Act with the purpose of developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for persons with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises.

Under the AODA, Ontario Regulation 429/07 entitled "Accessibility Standards for Customer Service" came into force on January 1, 2008. That Regulation establishes accessibility standards specific to customer service for public sector organizations and other persons or organizations that provide goods and services to members of the public or other third parties.

SHIP's policy is drafted in accordance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer

Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) and addresses the following:

- the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities;
- the use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities;
- the use of service animals by persons with disabilities;
- the use of support persons by persons with disabilities;
- notice of temporary disruptions in services and facilities;
- training;
- customer feedback regarding the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities; and
- notice of availability and format of documents.

## **2. Definitions**

### Assistive Device

A device used to assist persons with disabilities in carrying out activities or in accessing the services of persons or organizations covered by the Customer Service Standard.

### Disability

(a) 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,

(b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,

(c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,

- (d) a mental disorder, or
- (e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

#### Guide Dog

A guide dog as defined in section 1 of the Blind Persons' Rights Act is a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having qualifications prescribed by the regulations under the Blind Persons' Rights Act.

#### Service Animal

Any animal used by a person with a disability for reasons relating to the disability where it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or where the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that he or she requires the animal for reasons relating to his or her disability; or a valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada or a certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school.

#### Support Person

A person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to assist him or her with communication, mobility, personal care, or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

### **3. General Principles**

#### **a. The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities**

SHIP will use reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles:

- SHIP's services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;
- the provision of SHIP's services to persons with disabilities are integrated with those provided to persons who do not have disabilities;
- persons with disabilities are given an opportunity equal to that of persons without disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from SHIP's services.

#### **b. Communication with Persons with Disabilities**

When communicating with a person with a disability, SHIP will do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

#### **c. Notice of Temporary Disruptions in Services and Facilities**

SHIP is aware that the operation of its services and facilities is important to the public. However, temporary disruptions in SHIP's services and facilities may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within SHIP's control or knowledge.

SHIP will make reasonable effort to provide notice of the disruption to the public, including information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any that may be available. SHIP will make reasonable effort to provide prior notice of planned disruption if possible, recognizing that in some circumstances such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruption, advance notice will not be possible. In such cases, SHIP will provide notice as soon as possible.

When temporary disruptions occur to SHIP's services, we will provide notice by posting the information in visible places, or on SHIP's website ([www.shipshey.ca](http://www.shipshey.ca)), or by any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances as soon as reasonably possible.

#### **d. Assistive Devices and other Measures that Assist with Accessibility**

A person with a disability may provide their own assistive device for the purpose of obtaining, using and benefiting from SHIP's services.

It should be noted that it is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that his or her assistive device is operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

#### **e. Service Animals**

Persons with a disability may enter premises owned and operated, or operated, by SHIP accompanied by a service animal and keep the animal with them if the public has access to such premises and the animal is not otherwise excluded by law. If a service animal is excluded by law, SHIP will ensure that alternate means are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from SHIP's services.

It should be noted that it is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that his or her service animal is kept in control at all times.

#### **f. Support Persons**

A person with a disability may enter premises owned and operated, or operated, by SHIP with a support person and have access to the support person while on the premises.

#### **g. Feedback**

SHIP is committed to providing high quality services to all members of the public it serves. Feedback is welcomed as it may identify areas that require change and encourage continuous service improvements.

Feedback from a member of the public about the delivery of services to persons with disabilities may be given by telephone, in person, in writing, in electronic format or through other methods.

Information about the feedback process will be readily available to the public and notice of the process will be posted on SHIP's website ([www.shipshey.ca](http://www.shipshey.ca)) and/or in other appropriate locations.

#### **h. Training**

SHIP will ensure that all persons to whom this policy applies receive training as required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. The amount and format of training given will be tailored to suit each person's interactions with the public and his or her involvement in the development of policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services.

The content of the training will include:

- a review of the purposes of the AODA;
- the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429 / 07);
- instruction on SHIP's policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities;
- how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;
- what to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing SHIP's services;
- how to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or who require the assistance of a support person or service animal; and
- Training will be provided on an ongoing basis as changes occur to SHIP's policies, procedures and practices governing the provision of services to persons with disabilities. In addition, SHIP will keep records of the training, including the date on which training is provided and the names of individuals to whom it is provided.

#### **4. Availability and Format of Documents Required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07)**

All documents required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, including the SHIP's Accessible Customer Service policies, procedures and practices, notices of temporary disruptions, training records, and written feedback process is available upon request.

When providing a document to a person with a disability, SHIP will provide the document, or the information contained in the document, in a format that takes the person's disability into account.

## **5. Notice of the Availability of Documents**

Notice of the availability of all documents required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service will be posted on SHIP's website and will also be made available by request.

## **6. For More Information**

To review the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, Ontario Regulation 429/07 in its entirety, please visit:

[Ontario Regulation 429/07](#)

For additional information visit the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) website at:

<http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass>