



SUBJECT: Accessible Customer Service Policy

MISSION

Where art is the catalyst for shared experience, dialogue and imagination.
Roots in the community, eyes on the world.

PURPOSE

The Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery is actively committed to the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace. In fulfilling our mission, the Kitchener Waterloo Art Gallery (KW|AG) strives at all times to provide its goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities and give them equal opportunity to access these goods and services in the same manner and place as all other customers. We support the full inclusion of persons with disabilities; this policy establishes the direction and commitment needed to ensure that customers with disabilities receive accessible service with the same respect as others do.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the delivery of customer service provided by KW|AG.

DEFINITIONS

“Assistive Devices” shall mean an auxiliary aid such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids, and medical aids (i.e. canes, crutches, wheelchairs, or hearing aids etc.) to access and benefit from the goods and services of KW|AG.

“Barrier” shall mean anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of the disability. Barriers may include a physical, architectural and attitudinal barrier as well as, an information or communication barrier, technological barriers, a policy, procedure or a practice.

“Disability” shall be defined as found in the Ontario Human Rights Code (Part II, Section 10. (1) of the OHRC):

- 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 coordination,



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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 Dogs or Service Animal” shall mean any animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability.

“Policies” shall mean the policies KW|AG intends to implement including any rules for staff.

“Procedures” shall mean how KW|AG will go about implementing their policy and the steps staff will be expected to take.

“Practices” shall mean what KW|AG does on a day to day basis, including how staff actually offers or delivers its services.

“Staff” An employee, volunteer or otherwise who, on behalf of KW|AG interacts with the public.

“Support Person” shall mean any person whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member or friend who accompanies a person with a disability to aid him or her with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods and services.



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PROCEDURES

Providing goods and services to people with disabilities

KW|AG is committed to providing customer service to those with disabilities in a way that respects their rights to dignity, independence and integration.

Communication

To communicate effectively with persons with disabilities, we will consider their disability and communicate with them in the most appropriate manner. We will train staff on how to communicate properly to accommodate all forms of disabilities.

Telephone services

We will provide accessible telephone services to our visitors. We will train staff to communicate with visitors over the telephone to speak clearly and slowly in a plain language. If telephone communication is not suitable to visitors' needs, we will offer to communicate with them by e-mail or relay services.

Assistive devices

We welcome all persons with disabilities to use assistive devices in the gallery. We will ensure our staff is trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by our visitors. KW|AG has electronic door openers on lobby doors, elevator, and a wheelchair (available upon request at reception desk).

Billing

All invoices are available in the following formats upon request: hard copy and e-mail. We will answer any questions customers may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone or email.

Use of service animals and support persons

We welcome people with disabilities, including their service animal and/or support person. All staff and volunteers will be trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who use a service animal and/or support person.



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Notice of temporary disruption

KW|AG will provide notice of service disruptions which include the reason for the disruption and its anticipated duration.

In the case of an unscheduled disruption, the Notice will be posted at the location of the service disruption as soon as practically possible.

In the case of a scheduled disruption KW|AG will post the Notice prior to the disruption, at the physical location and on our website one week prior to the disruption.

Entrances

Main entrance doors to The Centre in the Square lobby and main entrance doors to KW|AG are accessible and equipped with automatic doors.

Parking and Off-Loading

Taxis and other vehicles may use the two offloading zones (off Ellen Street or off Otto Street) to drop off and pickup visitors with disabilities. The City of Kitchener parking lot located off Otto Street has paid parking spaces reserved for people with disabilities.

Training for staff

The KW|AG will train staff and volunteers who interact with the public, to meet the needs of people with disabilities. This includes the training and documentation requirements in Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and its regulations.

Feedback

Please direct feedback on the accessibility of customer service provided by KW|AG to Shelly Mitchell, Director of Finance & Administration

Telephone 519-579-5860 ext 212

Email smitchell@kwag.on.ca.

Mailing Address: 1010 Queen Street N, Kitchener ON N2H 6P7



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All feedback will be kept in strict confidence and will be used to improve customer services. In addition, the author of the feedback will be provided a response in an appropriate format outlining actions deemed appropriate, if any. .

Questions about this policy

If there are any inquiries about this policy, your inquiry will be referred to Shelly Mitchell, Director of Finance & Administration, 519-579-5860 ext 212 or smitchell@kwag.on.ca