

## Human Resources Policies and Procedures

### **SUBJECT: Accessible Customer Service Standard**

AppleOne Group of Companies is committed to servicing all customers and clients including people with disabilities in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005 and Regulation 429/07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*.

This policy establishes that all goods and services provided by AppleOne Group of Companies will be provided to persons with disabilities and all other customers in relation to the following key principles:

**Dignity** – Services for persons with disabilities are treated in a respectful manner, and are treated as customers and clients who are valued and as deserving of effective and full service as any other customer.

**Independence** - Services for persons with disabilities shall support their independence free from the influence of others while respecting their individual rights to personal privacy and safety.

**Integration** – Services offered shall allow persons with disabilities to fully benefit from services in the same or similar way and in the same place as other customers. Alternate measures may be used when integration does not serve the needs of all people with disabilities.

**Equality of Opportunity** – Services for persons with disabilities will have the same opportunity to benefit from goods and services as other clients and customers and shall not need to make significantly more effort to access or obtain services.

### **DEFINITIONS**

**Accessible** – Providing customer service that is easily understood and providing any means available to persons with a disability.

**Assistive Devices** – Any auxiliary aid such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids (i.e. canes, crutches, wheelchairs, or hearing aids).

**Disability** - Same as the definition of disability found in the Ontario Human Rights Code.

**Service Animals** – Any animal that is trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability. For the purpose of this policy, service animals are defined as:

- a) A “guide dog” as defined in section 1 of the Blind Persons’ Rights Act

A “service animal” if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or 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 Person** – A “support person” means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods and services.

## **POLICY REQUIREMENTS**

### **Assistive Devices**

AppleOne Group of Companies 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 and services.

### **Communication**

AppleOne Group of Companies will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

### **Service Animals**

AppleOne Group of Companies welcomes persons with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on parts of our premises that are open to the public. Where a service animal is excluded by law from the premises, the reason why the animal is excluded will be explained to the person with disabilities. AppleOne Group of Companies will also ensure that other measures are available to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use and benefit from the Company's goods and services. The service animal must be under the care and control of the individual at all times.

### **Support Persons**

Support persons will be permitted on all AppleOne Group of Companies properties and meeting rooms which are open to the public. Fees will not be charged for support persons for admission to AppleOne Group of Companies buildings. Where confidentiality is concerned, AppleOne Group of Companies may request the support person to sign a confidentiality agreement. The customer shall determine whether a support person is necessary however, AppleOne Group of Companies may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when the health and safety of the person with a disability and of others on the premises is at risk.

### **Notice of Temporary Disruption**

AppleOne Group of Companies will provide notice to the public in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities. The notice provided will include the reason for the disruption, the anticipated duration and alternative facilities or services. The notice will be placed at

- a) All applicable AppleOne Group of Companies locations
- b) On the AppleOne website

### **Training**

AppleOne Group of Companies will provide training to every person who deals with members of the public or develops policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to members of the public or third parties. Such persons will include employees, agents, students or volunteers.

All training shall include:

- a) A review of the purposes of the Act and the requirements of the Regulation
- b) How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability
- c) How to act with persons with disability who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person
- d) How to use equipment or devices available on the provider's premises or otherwise provided by the provider that may help with the provision of goods and services to a person with a disability.

- e) What to do if a person with a particular type of disability having difficulty accessing the provider's goods or services.

Training will be mandatory for all new employees and employees will be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to policies, practices and procedures.

### **Feedback Process**

AppleOne Group of Company welcomes feedback from the public. Feedback may be provided in a manner convenient to persons with disabilities including but not limited to:

- In person
- By telephone
- In writing
- By email

Feedback received will be reviewed and investigated by the Human Resources Managers. If requested, follow-up will be provided.

### **Notice of Availability of Documents**

AppleOne Group of Companies will provide the public with notice of availability of documents upon request. Documentation provided will take into consideration an individual's disability.

### **Modifications to Policies**

AppleOne Group of Companies is committed to developing policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Any Company policy that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be removed or modified.