

## Who to contact for additional assistance

Accessibility and customer service is everyone's concern. If you encounter circumstances where you feel that you need additional assistance, please contact your supervisor, or

City of Kitchener Inclusion Services at 519-741-2200 ext 7225  
or TTY 1-866-969-9994 or [access@kitchener.ca](mailto:access@kitchener.ca)

City of Waterloo Inclusion Services at 519-747-8651  
or TTY 1-866-786-3941 or [access@waterloo.ca](mailto:access@waterloo.ca)

### Or visit:

[www.kitchener.ca](http://www.kitchener.ca) or search "accessibility" on the intranet

[www.waterloo.ca](http://www.waterloo.ca) or search "accessibility" on the intranet

[www.mcass.gov.on.ca](http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca) or [www.AccessON.ca](http://www.AccessON.ca)

For alternate formats of this brochure, please contact Inclusion Services.



### Did you know...

"One in seven people in Ontario have a disability. Over the next twenty years, that number will rise as the population ages."

Source: Ministry of Community and Social Services, Making Ontario Accessible



INCLUSION SERVICES  
**AT YOUR SERVICE**  
ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE



## ***A brief overview of the accessibility legislation***

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 will make Ontario more accessible by 2025. All businesses and organizations in Ontario are required to meet certain accessibility standards in five key areas: customer service, information and communication, employment, transportation and built environment.

***The Customer Service Standard became law in 2008.***

### ***Service Animals***

Service animals are used for many different reasons, including mobility assistance, sound alert, and autism assistance. **We welcome service animals in all city facilities.**

### ***Assistive Devices***

Assistive devices help people do daily tasks, and can include wheelchairs, walkers or recording machines. **We welcome assistive devices in all city facilities.**

### ***Support Persons***

A Support person may provide service to an individual requiring assistance with mobility, guidance for persons with sensory disabilities (hearing/sight), personal care, medical needs or other reasons.

**We welcome support persons in all city facilities.**

### ***Importance of using person-first language***

Using people-first language is respectful as it emphasizes the person and not the disability.

**Say...**a person with a disability

**Instead of...**a disabled person

**Say...**a person with a developmental disability

**Instead of...**a mentally retarded person

**Say...**a person with a vision disability

**Instead of...**a blind person

**Say...**a person who is hard of hearing/deaf

**Instead of...**a deaf person

## ***A checklist for providing excellent customer service***

**Offer respect and consideration** Treat people with disabilities with the same respect and consideration you would give to anyone else.

**Get to know the person's needs/Be patient and take the necessary time**

Listen to what the person is saying, just as you would with anyone else. Sometimes it may take a person with a disability a little bit longer to express themselves (ie. they may be using a communication device.)

**Speak directly to the person** Speak directly to the person with a disability, not to his or her support person or interpreter.

**Speak in your regular tone of voice** People with disabilities will tell you if you need to speak louder.

**Ask before you offer help** People with disabilities can tell you the best way you can help them. A person with a disability may have an established routine of how to do something therefore, please ask first before offering to help.

**Do not pretend to understand if you have not** Simply ask the person with a disability to repeat themselves. If you understood part of what was said please rephrase what you have understood so that the person with a disability will only need to repeat back the piece that you did not understand.

**Do not touch or distract service animals** They are working and need to stay focused on their task.

**Do not touch or move assistive devices without permission** These items are a part of the person's personal space

**Consider accessibility when planning a meeting or event** Consider the location, the signage materials distributed at the event (handouts, brochure, etc) or if ASL or assistive devices are required.

**Keep obstacles out of the way** Ensure that there are no tripping hazards and that pathways are kept clear.

**Assisting people with disabilities in a respectful and helpful way is not just the right thing to do – it's the law.**