

VOYAGEUR TRANSPORTATION SERVICES/VOYAGO	SUBJECT: VOYAGEUR TRANSPORTATION SERVICES/VOYAGO CORPORATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL		DOCUMENT VTS-118
	TITLE: ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE		PAGE 1 of 7
Prepared by: B. Alexander	Approved: T. Wintermute	Rev. 11	Date: 01/01/2018

## 1.0 PURPOSE:

- 1.1. To establish processes and procedures to make our workplace more inclusive in compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005. This legislation is not a replacement of, or a substitution for, the requirements established under the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- 1.2. To ensure Voyageur Transportation Services/Voyago's (VTS) policies and procedures are aligned with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality and meet, or exceed, the requirements of the AODA Customer Service Standards.

## 2.0 SCOPE:

- 2.1 This policy applies to all VTS divisions, locations and subsidiaries. This policy applies to all employees, Independent Contractors, employees of thereof, students, volunteers, or any other individual performing work or providing services on behalf of VTS.

## 3.0 DEFINITIONS:

- 3.1 Company – refers to VTS and all its divisions, locations and subsidiaries.
- 3.2 VTS – refers to Voyageur Transportation Services/Voyago.
- 3.3 AODA – refers to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
- 3.4 Accessible Formats – refers to, but is not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.
- 3.5 Assistive Device – refers to a technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of a person with a disability. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that customers bring with them such as a hearing aid, wheelchair, walker or a personal oxygen tank and may assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering and/or reading.
- 3.6 AODA Core Principles – refers to the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality.
  - Independence – freedom from control, influence, support, aid, or the like of others.
  - Dignity – person is able to maintain his/her self-respect and respect of others.
  - Integration – an act or instance of combining into an integral whole.
  - Equality – the state of quality of being equal.

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- 3.7 Communication Supports – refers to, but is not limited to, captioning, alternative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications.
- 3.8 Disability – refers to disabilities of different severity, including visible and non-visible disabilities and those with periodic affects. Disability is defined, by the Human Rights Code, as:
- 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;
  - a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
  - a learning disability, or 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.
- 3.9 Service Animal – as reflected in Section 4(9) of the Accessibility Standards of Customer Service indicates that an animal is 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
  - the person can provide a letter, upon request, from a regulated health professional that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.
- 3.10 Regulated Health Professional - A member of one of the following colleges:
- College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario
  - College of Chiropractors of Ontario
  - College of Nurses of Ontario
  - College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario
  - College of Optometrists of Ontario
  - College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
  - College of Physiotherapists of Ontario
  - College of Psychologists of Ontario

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- College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario

3.11 Support Person – as reflected in Ontario Regulation 429/07, 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, medical needs or access to goods and services.

3.12 HR – refers to the Human Resources department.

#### **4.0 POLICY:**

- 4.1 The Company will comply with the regulations and standards as set out in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005. VTS is committed to pursuing this goal in our workplace and has developed and implemented policies to achieve accessibility through meeting the requirements of the Act and its regulations.
- 4.2 VTS is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner, and in a way that takes into consideration the accessibility of the individual based on the type of disability.
- 4.3 The Company's multi-year Accessibility Plan for removing barriers in our workplace and for the provision of goods and services to our customers and other third parties plan is posted on our website ([www.voyageurtransportation.ca](http://www.voyageurtransportation.ca)) and is available in an accessible format upon request. VTS commits to reviewing this plan regularly, at least once every five years.
- 4.4 To ensure that the policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity VTS will:
- ensure that all customers receive the same value and quality of service by implementing an accessible Customer Feedback Process;
  - allow customers with disabilities to do things in their own ways, at their own pace as long as this does not present a safety risk;
  - use alternative methods when possible to ensure that customers with disabilities have access to the same services, in the same place and in a similar manner;
  - permit persons with disabilities to use assistive devices, support persons and service animals as required;
  - encourages open communication with persons with disabilities and communicate in a manner that takes into account the customer's disability; and

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- provide notice of planned or unexpected disruption/inaccessibility in the Company's facilities or services.

- 4.5 VTS will provide alternate formats and communication supports to individuals upon request and provide notice that these alternate formats and supports are available.
- 4.6 Without limiting the requirements or expectation for accessibility, specific consideration shall be given to welcome persons with disabilities to use and/or request the following:
- Assistive Devices (i.e. raised seating platforms, wheelchair accessible lifts and lockdowns/tie downs, others as applicable)
  - Communication Supports and/or Accessible Formats
  - Support Persons
  - Service Animals
- 4.7 Training will be provided to all employees and volunteers during orientation and/or in online training format as soon as practicable. HR will keep records of training, including the dates training was provided and the names of employees who attended the training.
- 4.8 AODA training will be provided on an ongoing basis or as required by legislative and/or policy/procedure updates and upon identification of internal/external trends. Training will be provided by HR through various mediums including communications in the corporate newsletters, email and memo communications, at employee training and orientation meetings scheduled throughout the calendar year. Additionally, individuals will receive one-on-one training following an incident or complaint related to AODA.
- 4.9 VTS will ensure that all training provided is tailored to suit each person's role within the Company and that training will include at least the following:
- A review of the purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
  - The requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07.
  - Instructions on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.
  - VTS policies, procedures and practices relating to the provision of service to persons with disabilities.
  - Instructions on how to interact with people with disabilities who use assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal support person
  - Instructions on how to use equipment or devices that are available at our premises or that we provide that may help people with disabilities.

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- Instructions on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing VTS services.
- Instructions on how to comply with the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with Disabilities.

4.10 VTS will provide notice in the event of a disruption/inaccessibility in the facilities or services and provide notice that accommodations are available on request.

## 5.0 RESPONSIBILITY:

- 5.1 It is the responsibility of all employees to adhere to this policy, complete AODA in-class training and/or online training, apply the information provided in the workplace and to promote and maintain an accessible workplace for all employees, customers and visitors.
- 5.2 It is the responsibility of HR to provide training to all new employees and to provide training and communication on AODA throughout an individual's service to the Company.
- 5.3 It is the responsibility of HR to establish and make available a feedback process for the Company's accessibility and ensuring the provision of communications supports as required for employees, customers and other individuals requesting support.
- 5.4 It is the responsibility of the Operations Manager to provide notice when facilities or services used by individuals with disabilities to access/use goods or services are disrupted.

## 6.0 PROCEDURE:

### 6.1 Assistive Devices

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required. In cases where the assistive device presents a safety concern or where accessibility might be an issue, reasonable measures will be used to ensure access.

### 6.2 Guide Dogs, Service Animals and Service Dogs

A customer with a disability that is accompanied by a service animal will be allowed access to premises that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law. The customer accompanied by a service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all times.

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used by the customer for reasons relating to his or her disability, VTS may request verification from the customer. Verification includes:

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- a letter from a regulated health professional confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons related to the disability;
- 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.

### 6.3 Support Persons

If a customer with a disability is accompanied by a support person, VTS will ensure that both persons are allowed to enter the premises and/or access services together. In situations where confidential information might be discussed, consent will be obtained from the customer, prior to any conversation where confidential information might be discussed.

### 6.4 Notice of Disruptions in Service/Inaccessibility of Locations

Service disruptions and/or inaccessibility of a location may occur. Reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice. When disruptions occur, VTS will provide notice by placing notices in relevant conspicuous locations on VTS premises and/or vehicles, on the website and by any other method reasonable under the circumstances.

The following information will be included in the posting unless it is not readily known:

- goods or services that are disrupted or unavailable;
- reason for the disruption and anticipated duration;
- a description of alternative services or options.

### 6.5 Customer Feedback Process

VTS shall provide customers with the opportunity to provide feedback on our accessible customer service. Information about the feedback process will be available on our website and posted in our facilities. The feedback process and forms will be made available in accessible formats and with communications supports, upon request. The Company will provide or arrange for accessible formats and communications supports in a timely manner and based on a consultation with the individual to determine the suitability of a support that takes into account the person's accessibility needs.

Customers that provide formal feedback will receive acknowledgement of the feedback, along with any resulting actions based on the feedback submitted. VTS will log all feedback from customers and address concerns promptly. Resulting actions based on concerns will be provided back within 21 days of feedback submission.

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## 6.6 Emergency Response Information

VTS will provide and make available in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request, information about emergency response plans or public safety to persons with disabilities.

## Administration and Approval

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy or its related procedures please contact:

- Sandra Grant, Vice President of Human Resources  
519-455-4579 x 229  
573 Admiral Court, London ON, N5V 4L3  
sgrant@voyageurtransportation.ca

For more information on AODA, you can refer to:

AODA (the Act) at: [http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws\\_statutes\\_05a11\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_05a11_e.htm)

Customer Service Standards at: [http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/source/regs/english/2007/elaws\\_src\\_regs\\_r07429\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/source/regs/english/2007/elaws_src_regs_r07429_e.htm)

**Reference:** VTS-118-A Accessibility Plan

VTS-118-B Accessible Customer Service 573 Admiral Court

VTS-118-C Accessible Customer Service Satellite Location

VTS-118-D Customer Service Feedback Form

## Revision Log

Rev. Level	Rev. Date	Description of Change
0	11/04/2011	New Policy
1	05/01/2012	Changed name to Accessibility Policy to incorporate the Integrated Standards, changed formatting and reversed the policy and responsibilities sections to be consistent with other policies, revised policy purpose and scope accordingly, added definitions, added to the policy section and added the procedures sections for customer service and the integrated standards.
2	10/12/2012	Removed sections that apply to Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. Review and updated policy. Added signature line.
3	12/18/2013	Policy Review.
4	01/01/2014	Change Date
5	04/02/2014	Update Contact Information.
6	01/01/2015	Updated Job Titles and reviewed policy.
7	03/08/2015	Added that AODA training and communications are provided on an on going basis and as required.
8	01/01/2016	Change Date
9	08/04/2016	Updated for changes effective July 1, 2016 re: regulated health professionals that can identify service animals and requirement for all employees to receive training for AODA
10	01/01/2017	Review policy, update job titles, change date, introduce Voyago
11	01/01/2018	Review Policy, Change Date, Update contact information