



Global Public Affairs Accessible Customer Service Plan

Approved: September 11th, 2013 | Revised: November 25, 2014

Purpose

The Ontario legislature enacted the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (the "Act")* is to establish standards that ensure equal access for persons with disabilities.

By law, the Act and its Regulations require Global to have in place this Accessible Customer service Plan (the "Plan"). In addition, the Act and its Regulations require Global to ensure that our employees, interns, contractors and other applicable third parties, receive training about providing Global services to persons with disabilities.

Global Public Affairs Inc. ("Global") is committed to providing our services at the highest standard of excellence and integrity to all clients, including persons with disabilities.

This Plan sets out the practices and procedures which will guide Global when providing Global services to persons with disabilities.

Definitions

"Assistive Device" - a tool, technology or other mechanism used to support the functional abilities of persons with disabilities, for example: a magnifier; a walker; a staircase lift; an oxygen tank; a computer screen reader; and a communications (Bliss) board.

"Disability" – the term disability as defined by the Act and the *Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990* refers to:

- 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 assistive 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*.

"Guide Dog" – is a highly-trained working dog that has been trained at one of the facilities listed in *Ontario Regulation 58* under the *Blind Persons' Rights Act, 1990* to provide mobility, safety and increased independence for people who are blind.

"Service Animal" - any trained animal used by, or prescribed by a physician for, a person with a disability for reasons relating to the disability.



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“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.

Elements of the Plan

This Plan comprises:

- The Provision of Services to Persons with Disabilities
- Our Practices and Procedures
- Our Feedback Process
- Our Commitment to Training
- Workplace Emergency Response Information
- Our Responsibility

Modifications to Other Global Policies

Any Global internal policy, practice or procedure which is inconsistent with this Plan or which does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified accordingly or revoked.

Publicizing the Plan

This Plan will be posted on Global’s website, where Global will specify that any person may request a copy of this Plan. If a request comes from a person with a disability, Global shall (where practicable) provide the Plan in a format that takes into account that person’s disability.

The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities

Global will always use reasonable efforts to ensure that our services are provided to persons with disabilities according to the fundamental principles of independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity for all.

- Global agrees that persons with disabilities should have the independence and equal opportunity to access Global services on their own, and without undue inconvenience.
- Global will always deliver our services in a manner that allows persons with disabilities to maintain self-respect and the respect of others, and will never make assumptions about what persons with disabilities can and cannot do.
- Global believes in creating an inclusive environment, allowing persons with disabilities access to Global services in the same place, and in the same or similar manner, as do all Global clients.
- Global will ensure that clients with disabilities enjoy the same quality and benefit from accessing our services as given to others.



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Practices and Procedures

Global commits itself to the following practices and procedures regarding interaction and communication with clients and/or members of the public who have a disability, whether that disability is visual, audible, verbal, physical, mental, intellectual, or otherwise.

Assistive Devices

Persons with disabilities may use their own personal assistive devices as required when accessing Global services.

In cases where the assistive device unduly inhibits access to Global services, our employees and contractors will take reasonable, alternative measures to accommodate persons with disabilities when accessing Global services.

Examples include: helping a hearing-impaired person to fit their phone amplification device or teletypewriter (TTY) onto phones when calling from Global premises; [sharing the use of a hearing disabled person's real-time captioning device to converse with them]; meeting a mobility-impaired person at a location with more convenient access; etc.

Method of Communication

When communicating with disabled persons, Global will consider the specific needs of each individual when selecting a method of communication, so as to make that communication as effective and dignified as reasonably possible. Wherever possible, Global will directly ask that individual how they prefer to communicate and, as need be, change the method of communication accordingly.

Examples include: remembering always to face a hearing disabled person who prefers lip-reading to communicate; changing the typeface/increasing the font size of written material for persons with low vision; corresponding by e-mail rather than letterpost to accommodate persons with disabilities who use computer screen readers or speech-capture computer software; etc.

Service Animals

Global welcomes persons with disabilities and their guide dogs and service animals. Guide dogs and service animals are allowed on the parts of Global premises that are open to the public and will be allowed to keep the guide dog or service animal with him or her unless otherwise excluded by law.

If a guide dog or service animal is excluded by law, Global will offer alternative methods to enable persons with disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from Global Services, where possible.

An example of a possible alternative method would be to secure the service animal in a safe location and offer the guidance of an employee.



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Recognizing a Guide Dog or Service Animal:

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

Verification may include:

- A letter from a physician or nurse 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.

Care and Control of the Animal:

A customer or client that is accompanied by a guide dog or service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all times.

Allergies:

If a health and safety concern presents itself, such as a severe allergy to the animal, Global will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals affected.

Support Persons

A person with a disability is welcome to have a support person accompany them on the parts of Global premises that are open to the public.

There may be times where seating and availability prevent the customer or client and support person from sitting beside one another. In these situations, Global will make every reasonable attempt to resolve the issue.

In situations where confidential information may be discussed, consent will be obtained from the customer, prior to the discussion.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

Global will provide the public with notice in the event of a temporary disruption in facilities or access services typically used by persons with disabilities at its Ontario office locations. Where practical, our notice will provide information about: the reason for the disruption; its anticipated duration; and what alternative facilities or access services are available, if any.

Notices will be posted on the doors of the main reception area at the affected Global office location and on Global's website. In circumstances of unexpected temporary disruptions, advance notice may not be possible.



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Feedback Process

Global welcomes feedback on the manner in which our services are provided to Ontarians with disabilities. Global will ensure that feedback can be received by the following methods:

In writing: to Global Public Affairs Inc., attn.: Office Management, 50 O'Connor Street, Suite 901, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 6L2

By e-mail: to tkenyon@globalpublic.com

By telephone: at 613-782-2336 or 613-783-6084

In person: to at 50 O'Connor Street, Suite 901, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 6L2

Or any other method that takes into account the correspondent's disability. Our website has an attached form for you to use in order to help you with the submission of your feedback.

All feedback will be directed to the Office Manager, and any written feedback will be followed by a written reply from Global within 15 business days of receipt.

Public Notice regarding Feedback Process

This Feedback Process will be posted on Global's website, and will be communicated verbally or in writing upon request.

Commitment to Training

Global will ensure that its employees, interns, and contractors receive training on the purposes of the *Act*, the requirements of the *Act's* customer service standard, and the contents of this Plan, along with general instruction about the following matters:

- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person.
- How to use equipment or devices available at Global's Ontario office locations that may help with the provision of Global services to persons with disabilities, such as elevators, lifts, or other facilities or access services found at those locations.
- What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing Global's services.



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Who Will Be Trained

As required by the *Act*, this training will be provided to each current Global employee or contractor who:

- deals on behalf of Global with the public or other third parties located in Ontario; or
- participates in developing Global policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of Global services to the public or other third parties located in Ontario.

In this context, “third parties” means other businesses, governments and organizations.

In addition, this training will also be provided:

- to each current Global employee or contractor who previously did not require training but now, because of a change of duties, becomes subject under the *Act* to the training requirement, within 30 days of the change of duties; and
- to each new Global employee or contractor who is subject under the *Act* to the training requirement, within 30 days of starting to work for Global.

Furthermore, updated training will also be provided when changes are made to this Plan, or to the *Act* and its regulations.

Record of Training

Global shall keep a written record of which persons undertook training on providing Global services to persons with disabilities, and when.

Workplace Emergency Response Information

In addition to providing clients with disabilities with full accessibility to goods and services at all times in a way that respects their dignity and independence, Global is committed to providing employees, interns and contractors with disabilities with the same opportunities as others. With this in mind, Global will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to all employees, interns and contractors with a visible or non-visible disability, if the individual so requires. This information can also be provided to the employee who is designated to assist the individual with disability.

Responsibility

Global’s Human Resources Department is responsible for the communication and interpretation of this policy. It is the Department manager’s, or his or her designate, responsibility to administer the Plan as per the following procedures.