



**POLICY SECTION:** ADMINISTRATION

**SUB-SECTION:**

**POLICY NAME:** ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR SERVICES AND FACILITIES

**POLICY NO:** A. 36

<b>Date Approved:</b> Board- March 31, 2010	<b>Date of Next Review:</b> September 2019	<b>Dates of Amendments:</b> February 24, 2016-Board September 22, 2016- Board
<b>Cross References:</b> <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)</i> <i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11</i> <i>Ontario Human Rights Code</i> <i>Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001</i> TCDSB Policy A. 35 Accessibility Standards TCDSB Policy A. 35 APPENDIX Multi-Year Accessibility Plan		
<b>Appendix :</b> <i>Accessibility Best Practices Guideline- Process for Assessing Requests Respecting Accessibility for Students with Disabilities</i>		

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the practices and procedures approved by the Toronto Catholic District School Board in order to meet the obligations of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and specifically in regard to Customer Service Standards under O. Reg. 191/11. The Board, through this policy, establishes and implements practices and procedures consistent with its goal of compliance, as well as its commitment to excellent customer service for all.

**Scope and Responsibility:**

This policy applies to all operational policies and procedures in all facilities within the Toronto Catholic District School Board. The Director of Education is responsible for this policy.



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**Alignment with MYSP:**

Living Our Catholic values

Strengthening Public Confidence

Fostering Student Achievement and Well-Being

Providing Stewardship of Resources

**Policy:**

The Toronto Catholic District School Board as a public sector organization is committed to providing services and facilities to our students, parents/guardians, the public and our staff that are free of barriers and biases in a manner that, as much as reasonably possible, respects an individual's dignity and independence, including, for those with disabilities. In its ongoing efforts to strive for accessibility, the Toronto Catholic District School Board endorses the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the regulations supporting this Act.

**Regulations:**

1. This policy aims to ensure that people with disabilities are given the same opportunity as others to obtain and benefit from services and facilities offered by the Toronto Catholic District School Board. Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that services and facilities offered by the Board are provided in such a way that the key principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity are respected.
2. Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that people with disabilities have the same opportunity of access to our services and facilities in the same location and in a similar way as these services and facilities are available to all others we serve, unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether



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temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable the person to access the service or facilities.

3. When communicating with a person with a disability, the person's specific disability will be taken into account.

#### **4. Use of Assistive Devices**

- a. People with disabilities may use their own personal assistive devices, or those that may be provided by the Board, while obtaining any services provided in any premise of the Board.
- b. A person with a disability may enter any premise of the Board with that assistive device unless not allowed by law. If the device is not allowed by law, the person will be so advised and alternate options will be explored. If barriers to the use of an assistive device exist at any premises, these barriers, where reasonably possible, will be removed.

#### **5. Service Animals and Support Persons**

- a. Service animals are allowed to enter premises with any person with a disability, except where animals are not allowed by law.
- b. Where an animal is not allowed by law, alternate options will be explored to provide the service to the person with a disability.
- c. Support persons are allowed to go with any person with a disability in any area, on any Board premise. This will include attendance at any meetings or interviews.
- d. Depending on the circumstance, it may be appropriate for permission to be obtained from the person with the disability for their support person to attend a meeting or interview which could be considered private or confidential.
  - i. This permission can take many forms, depending on the specific needs of the person with the disability, and may



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include, written or verbal permission, a nod of the head, or otherwise.

- ii. Permission should be documented by Board staff.
- e. In some instances, after consultation with the person with a disability, the Board may require that a person with a disability be accompanied by a support person when on Board premises, but only in such instances where a support person is necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with the disability, or others on the premises.
  - i. If there is an admission fee payable as a result of the person's attendance at the premise, the organization will waive any applicable admission or fare.

## **6. Notice of Temporary Disruption**

- a. If there is a temporary disruption of facilities or services typically used by people with disabilities, notice of the disruption will be provided. Notice must include information about the reason for the disruption, the anticipated duration of the disruption and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available. This policy enables Board Staff, as appropriate, to design and implement required notices.
- b. Notice may be given by posting information at the premise, on the Board website, voice messaging or any other reasonable alternative in the particular circumstances. It is expected that consideration will be given to which people with disabilities will be most affected by the disruption and steps will be taken to ensure that the information about the disruption will be communicated in a way that best matches these needs.



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## **7. Customer Service Training**

- a. The Board will ensure that the following persons receive training about the provision of its services or facilities to persons with disabilities:
  - i. All employees and volunteers of the TCDSB;
  - ii. Every other person who provides services or facilities on behalf of the TCDSB; and
  - iii. Those who participate in developing the Board's policies.
- b. The training will include a review of the purposes of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of Customer Service Standards under Regulation 191/11 and address the following matters:
  - i. How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability;
  - ii. How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person;
  - iii. How to use equipment or devices available on Board premises, or otherwise provided by the Board, if any, that may help with the provision of services or facilities;
  - iv. What to do if a person with a particular disability is having difficulty accessing Board services.
- c. Training must be provided to each person as soon as practicable after assignment of applicable duties. Ongoing training must also be provided in connection with any changes to the policies, practices and procedures relating to the provision of services to people with disabilities.



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- d. Records of the training will be kept including, the dates on which the training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.
- e. Upon request, the TCDSB will provide a copy of a document describing its training policy, summarizing the content of the training and specifying when the training is to be provided.

#### **8. Feedback Process and Requirements**

- a. Any person wishing to provide feedback to the Board about the manner in which it provides service and facilities to people with disabilities and whether the feedback process established is accessible to people with disabilities may do so in a variety of ways, including: in person, by telephone, in writing by email, hard copy, diskette or fax, or by some other communication technology. Some schools may already have feedback processes in place and those processes can continue under this policy provided that the processes are not inconsistent with this policy.
- b. Where appropriate, feedback will be forwarded to the Board's Human Resources Department, to the attention of Superintendent of Human Resources. Upon receipt of feedback the matter will be reviewed by the Superintendent or designate, and the person who submitted feedback shall be responded to either verbally or in writing, as appropriate, concerning the feedback and any action which may have been taken as a result.

#### **9. Responsibilities**

- a. Trustees: To consider legislative requirements as well as the Board goals of accessibility and customer service for people with disabilities while developing and reviewing Board policies.



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b. Superintendents

- i. To oversee, monitor and support principals, managers and other employees in implementing this policy;
- ii. To strive to ensure that practices are consistent with the key principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity; and
- iii. To strive to ensure that all schools and workplaces facilitate excellent customer service for those with disabilities through a variety of appropriate means including, the use of assistive devices, service animals and/or support persons.

c. Human Resources Department

- i. To provide appropriate training/training guidelines for new and current staff, and volunteers, within appropriate timelines; and
- ii. To report, as required, on this policy to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario- Ministry of Community and Social Services;
- iii. To receive, and deal with, any complaint received as a result of customer service provision to persons with disabilities.

d. Principals and Managers

- i. To comply with and implement the *Customer Service Standards* policy;
- ii. To receive requests and feedback from customers with disabilities;
- iii. To determine, in consultation with the others where necessary, the most appropriate accommodation(s) to provide customer service;
- iv. To ensure that front-line staff and volunteers interfacing with customers are trained to know the policy and procedures; and



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v. To ensure that agents or others who are dealing with the public are aware of the policy and procedures.

e. Staff

- i. To comply with and support the implementation of the *Customer Service Standards* policy and procedures in schools and workplaces;
- ii. To participate in required training related to this policy; and
- iii. To direct feedback from customers regarding the policy to their immediate supervisor.

f. Customer

- i. To self-identify as having a disability for which they require assistance in accessing Board services and communicating such to the appropriate Board personnel; and
- ii. To collaborate with Board staff to determine suitable mode(s) of accommodation/assistance.



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**Definitions:**

Assistive Device: Any device used by people with disabilities to help increase, maintain or improve how a person with a disability can function. Such devices may include, but are not limited to, wheelchairs, walkers, white canes, oxygen tanks, electronic communication devices, elevators, stair lift etc.

Customer: Any person who uses the goods, services and facilities of the Board, including staff, students, parents and other members of the public.

Disability: As defined in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, Section 2, means a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness; b) a condition of mental impairment or developmental disability; c) a learning disability or a dysfunction on one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language; d) a mental disorder, or, e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

Dignity: Refers to service which is provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to maintain self-respect and the respect of others.

Equal Opportunity: Refers to service which is provided in a way that allows the person with a disability access to goods and service at the same level given to others.

Independence: Allows the person with a disability to do things on their own without unnecessary interference from others.



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Integration: Refers to service which is provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in the same or similar manner as other customers, unless an alternate measure is necessary to enable the person with the disability to access the goods or services.

Service Animal: An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if,

- (a) the animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person's disability, as a result of visual indicators such as the vest or harness worn by the animal; or
- (b) the person provides documentation from one of the following regulated health professionals confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability:
  - (i) A member of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario.
  - (ii) A member of the College of Chiropractors of Ontario.
  - (iii) A member of the College of Nurses of Ontario.
  - (iv) A member of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario.
  - (v) A member of the College of Optometrists of Ontario.
  - (vi) A member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario.
  - (vii) A member of the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario.
  - (viii) A member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario.
  - (ix) A member of the College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario. O. Reg. 165/16, s. 16.

Support Person: in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal



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care or medical needs or with access to goods, services or facilities. A support person is distinct from an employee who supports a student in the system.

### **Evaluation and Metrics:**

The effectiveness of the policy will be determined by measuring the following:

1. The TCDSB's Annual Accessibility Status Report will serve as an assessment and overview of the Board's achievements and status in working to provide barrier-free facilities, services, employment and instruction to our staff, students, parents, volunteers and Catholic community.
2. Recommendations from the Accessibility Working Group or any advice provided to the Director of Education will be assessed, monitored and considered for implementation.