



POLICY NUMBER: OPPO.9003

EFFECTIVE DATE: NOVEMBER 1, 2012

ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT:

Indus Community Services (Indus) is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code respecting non-discrimination.

Indus understands that obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and its accessibility standards do not substitute or limit its obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code or obligations to people with disabilities under any other law.

Indus is committed to complying with both the Ontario Human Rights Code and the AODA.

Indus is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities.

Our accessible customer service policies are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

2. PURPOSE:

To ensure all Indus programs and services are accessible to everyone in the community in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

3. SCOPE:

This policy applies to all Indus personnel and other third parties who deal with the public on behalf Indus.

4. PROCEDURE:

4.1. Assistive Devices

4.1.1. People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our goods, services or facilities.

4.1.2. In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access our goods, services or facilities.

4.1.3. We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices we have on site or that we provide that may be used by people with disabilities while accessing our goods, services or facilities.

4.2. Communication

4.2.1. We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

4.2.2. We will work with the person with a disability to determine what method of communication works for them.

4.3. Service Animals

- 4.3.1. We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public.
- 4.3.2. When we cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, our personnel may ask a person to provide documentation from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.
- 4.3.3. A service animal can be easily identified through visual indicators, such as when it wears a harness or a vest, or when it helps the person perform certain tasks.
- 4.3.4. If service animals are prohibited by another law, we will ensure that alternate means are available to enable the person with a disability to access our programs and services.

4.4. Support Persons

- 4.4.1. A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises.
- 4.4.2. Fee/fare will not be charged for support persons.
- 4.4.3. In certain cases, Indus might require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person for the health or safety reasons of:
 - i. The person with a disability
 - ii. Others on the premises
- 4.4.4. Before making a decision, Indus will:
 - i. Consult with the person with a disability to understand their needs
 - ii. Consider health or safety reasons based on available evidence
 - iii. Determine if there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others on the premises
- 4.4.5. If Indus determines that a support person is required, we will waive the admission fee or fare for the support person

4.5. Notice of Temporary Disruption

- 4.5.1. In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities Indus will notify people promptly. This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.
- 4.5.2. The notice will be made publicly available in visible places on our premises or on the Indus web site, or by any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

4.6. Training

- 4.6.1. Indus will provide accessible customer service training to:
 - i. All personnel
 - ii. Anyone involved in developing our policies
 - iii. Anyone who provides goods, services or facilities to customers on our behalf.
- 4.6.2. Staff will be trained on accessible customer service within thirty (30 days) days after being hired.
- 4.6.3. Training will include:

- i. Purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard
- ii. Indus' policies related to the customer service standard
- iii. How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- iv. How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- v. How to use the equipment or devices available on-site or otherwise that may help with providing goods, services or facilities to people with disabilities. What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing [organization name]'s goods, services or facilities

4.6.4. Staff will also be trained when changes are made to our accessible customer service policies.

4.7. Feedback Process

4.7.1. Indus welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns.

4.7.2. People may provide feedback by telephone, in writing, in electronic format or through other methods.

4.7.3. People who wish to provide feedback on the way Indus provides goods, services or facilities to people with disabilities may do by telephone, in writing, in electronic format or through other methods.

4.7.4. All feedback, including complaints, will be handled as per the Client Relations Policy # OPPO.9012.

4.7.5. Indus will make sure our feedback process is accessible to people with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports, on request.

4.8. Notice of availability of documents

4.8.1. Indus will notify the public that documents related to accessible customer service, are available upon request by posting a notice on our website.

4.8.2. Indus will provide this document in an accessible format or with communication support, on request. We will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the format or communication support. We will provide the accessible format in a timely manner and, at no additional cost.

4.9. Modifications to this or other policies

4.9.1. Any policies of Indus that do not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

5. RESPONSIBILITY:

5.1. It is the responsibility of all personnel within Indus to adhere to this policy. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action which if deemed appropriate by the CEO may include further action up to and including termination.

5.2. Direct Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that all personnel are properly oriented regarding this policy.

5.3. Human Resources will ensure that this policy remains current with respect to any changes to legislation and will notify the CEO of such changes to ensure that this policy and any related forms are revised to reflect current and applicable legislation.

6. DEFINITIONS:

6.1. “**Personnel**” for the purposes of this policy refers to all Indus employees, purchase of service contractors, student placements, volunteers (including Board Members) and other third parties who deal with the public on behalf Indus.

6.2. “**Regulated Health Professional**” for the purposes of this policy is defined as a member of one of the following colleges:

6.2.1. College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario

6.2.2. College of Chiropractors of Ontario

6.2.3. College of Nurses of Ontario

6.2.4. College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario

6.2.5. College of Optometrists of Ontario

6.2.6. College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario

6.2.7. College of Physiotherapists of Ontario

6.2.8. College of Psychologists of Ontario

6.2.9. College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario

7. REFERENCES:

7.1. Accessibility Feedback Form # GFO.9019

7.2. Client Relations Policy # OPPO.9012

7.3. Customer Service Training Policy # OPPO.9004

7.4. Integrated Accessibility Standards - AODA – Policy # OPPO.9005

7.5. Accessible Customer Service Plan - AODA – Plan # PLAN.9001

7.6. Multi-Year Accessibility Plan - AODA - 2014 - 23 – Plan # PLAN.9004

Policy Approvals

Date	Approved by
June 20 th , 2018	Vinitha Miranda, Director
June 25 th , 2018	Gurpreet S. Malhotra, CEO