



Real Estate Council of Ontario's Accessible Customer Service Policy

Real Estate Council of Ontario's (RECO) Accessible Customer Service Policy

1. Our Core Purpose, Mission and Values

Core Purpose: To foster confidence and uphold integrity in real estate transactions.

Mission: To regulate the activity of trading in real estate in the public interest.

Responsibility: Interpret, enforce, and suggest modification to regulation.

Relationship: RECO has an exclusive contract with the government to administer the Act and must perform in a fashion consistent with the government's expectations and the terms of the Administrative Agreement.

The Real Estate Council of Ontario is dedicated to organizational behaviour characterized by:

Integrity: Be truthful and trustworthy.

Accountability: Administer the Act competently in accordance with law.

Fairness: Act impartially and equitably.

Respect: Treat all with courtesy.

2. Our commitment

RECO strives to provide its goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of all people.

Goods and services provided by RECO to persons with disabilities are integrated with those provided to persons who do not have disabilities unless an alternative measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from RECO's goods or services.

When an alternative measure is necessary, RECO shall endeavour at all times to provide its goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities and in keeping with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*.

To this end and whenever possible we shall strive to provide people with disabilities the same opportunity to access and benefit from our goods and services in a similar way as other customers.

To ensure the best possible customer service, we encourage open two-way communication and expect persons with disabilities to communicate their need for accommodation or assistance if it is not readily apparent how that need can be met.

Our customers include but are not limited to the public, registrants, government and other stakeholders with an interest in the real estate industry.

3. Providing goods and service to people with disabilities

RECO is committed to serving all our customers including those with disabilities in ways that meet or exceed their expectations. We will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following manner:

- **Communication**

When communicating with customers with disabilities, we shall do so in ways that take into account their disability. Staff and others who act on RECO's behalf who communicate with customers are trained on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities in ways that will best meet their needs.

4. Use of assistive devices, service animals and support persons

- **Assistive devices**

RECO is committed to serving persons with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from its goods and services. An assistive device is any device used to assist persons with disabilities in carrying out activities or in accessing the goods or services offered by RECO.

Persons with disabilities shall be permitted to obtain, use or benefit from goods or services through the use of their own assistive devices. Exceptions may occur in situations where RECO has determined that the assistive device may pose a risk to the health and safety of a person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises. In these situations, if a person with a disability is hindered from accessing goods or services, an alternative accommodation shall be provided where possible.

It should be noted that it is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that his or her assistive device is operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

We will ensure that RECO employees know how to use assistive devices available in providing our goods and services and inform individuals wishing to access them of the assistive devices that are available.

- **Service animals**

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal in the areas of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties unless otherwise prohibited by law. We will also ensure that all staff dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

On rare occasions where a service animal is to be denied access to a facility or meeting room, other appropriate alternatives shall be suggested and might include

alternate meeting formats (e.g. teleconference where technology permits), delivery of goods / services at an alternate time or location, etc.

- **Support persons**

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter premises open to the public or other third parties with his or her support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on our premises.

Where there is a fee associated with participating in a RECO event, course, etc. the support person is permitted to attend at no cost. Please note that the support person is responsible for other services such as food, lodging, etc. however RECO will work to facilitate payment arrangements in this regard.

- Notice requirements re: service animals and support persons

As space for RECO organized events, courses, etc. may be limited and to ensure they can be accommodated, customers need to provide notice and/or provide documentation that they require the support of a service animal or support person.

5. Notice of temporary disruption

RECO will provide customers with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notice will be placed at all public entrances and service counters on our premises.

If the disruption is long-term, an announcement will also be posted on the organization website to inform all customers of the location, duration of the disruption and alternate solutions.

6. Training for staff

RECO will provide customer service training to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies, practices and procedures.

This training will be provided in the Employee Orientation package that staff receive when hired.

Training will include the following:

- The purposes of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the customer service standard
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities

- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- Familiarize employees with personal assistive devices and train employees on how to use devices on premise, such as automatic doors, TTY, etc., that may help with the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing RECO's goods and services
- RECO's policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard.

Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

7. Feedback process

The ultimate goal of RECO is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving customers with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcomed and appreciated. Feedback regarding the way RECO provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made by contacting:

- By Telephone: 416-207-4800 / 1-800-245-6910
- In Person or by Mail:
3300 Bloor Street West
West Tower, Suite 1200
Toronto, ON M8X 2X2
- If sent by mail, please address to the attention of:
Manager, Administration and Human Resources

Feedback will be used to improve RECO's customer service. Customers can expect to hear back from RECO within five business days in the format in which the feedback was received.

8. Modifications to this or other policies

We are committed to developing and updating customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities.

9. Questions about this policy

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to customers with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of a policy is not understood, please contact RECO as outlined under the *Feedback* section of this policy.

RECO's Accessible Customer Service Policy is posted on the public website and will be provided in an alternative format upon request within a reasonable amount of time.