



SWITCH
HEALTH

Customer Service Policy

At Switch Health, we are committed to providing a healthy, barrier-free, inclusive, and accessible environment for all employees, customers, and stakeholders. Our goal is to identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with disabilities and ensure that our workplace as well as our programs, goods, and services are fully accessible, both in physical and virtual environments.

Intent

All goods and services provided by Switch Health will follow the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equality of opportunity to people with disabilities as we work towards integrating accessibility standards to ensure a welcoming environment for everyone.

This policy meets the requirements of the customer service standards included in the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. It applies to the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties, not to the goods themselves.

Definitions

Assistive device: A technical aid, communication device, or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that customers bring with them, such as a wheelchair, walker, or a personal oxygen tank, and that might assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering, or reading.

Disability: As defined by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, 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 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: 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*, to provide mobility, safety, and increased independence for people who are blind.

Service animal: A service animal for a person with a disability if:

1. 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
2. The person provides documentation from a member of one of the following regulated health professional colleges confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability:
 - 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; or
 - College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario.

Support person: In relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies them in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs, or access to goods and services.

Guidelines

The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities

Switch Health is committed to ensure that its policies, practices, and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equality of opportunity to people with disabilities by:

- Ensuring that all customers receive the same value of goods and quality of service;
- Accommodating customers with disabilities to do things according to their unique needs and at their own pace when accessing goods and services, where it does not present a health and safety risk to themselves, other customers, or employees;
- Providing unique accommodations to ensure that customers with disabilities have access to the same level and quality of services as other customers;
- Understanding and accommodating the unique needs of all individuals with disabilities when providing goods and services; and
- Communicating in a manner that accommodates the unique needs of customers with disabilities.

The Use of Assistive Devices

Customer's Own Assistive Devices

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices, as required, when accessing goods and/or services provided by Switch Health.

In cases where an assistive device presents a health and safety concern or where accessibility might be an issue, other reasonable measures will be used to accommodate the customer to access goods and/or services, as long as the solution does not present a health and safety risk to themselves, other customers, or employees.

For example, open flames and oxygen tanks cannot be near one another. In this case, an accommodation would be made to move a customer to a location that does not pose a risk to their health and safety, or that of other customers, employees and assets. Should a customer require access to an elevator for mobility and it is not readily available, our service will be provided in a location that meets the needs of the customer.

Guide Dogs and Service Animals

A customer with a disability who is accompanied by a guide dog or service animal will be granted access to premises that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law. “No pet” policies do not apply to guide dogs or service animals.

Employees may respectfully ask if an animal is a service animal, but they will not ask the nature of the person’s disability or purpose of the animal.

Food Service Areas

A customer with a disability who is accompanied by guide dog or service animal will be granted access to food service areas that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law.

Guide dogs and service animals are only permitted into areas where food is served, sold, or offered for sale to comply with the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*, Ontario Regulation 493/17.

Exclusion Guidelines

If a customer’s guide dog or service animal is excluded by law (see applicable laws below), Switch Health will offer alternative methods to accommodate the person with a disability to access goods and services, when possible. For example, Switch Health might accommodate a customer’s disability by securing the guide dog or service animal in a safe location and offering the assistance of an employee to facilitate the delivery of goods and/or services.

Applicable Laws

Dog Owners’ Liability Act, 2005: If there is a conflict between a provision of this legislation or of a regulation under this or any other act relating to banned breeds (such as pit bulls) and a provision of a by-law passed by a municipality relating to these breeds, the provision that is more restrictive in relation to controls or bans on these breeds prevails. Staff will respectfully explain that the service animal must be removed from the public area due to a municipal by-law and make alternate arrangements or provide the service outside the public area.

Recognizing a Guide Dog or Service Animal:

Should the guide dog or service animal not be identifiable as such, employees may respectfully ask if the animal is a service animal.

Care and Control of the Animal:

Any customer who is accompanied by a guide dog or service animal is responsible for always maintaining care and control of the animal.

Allergies and Other Health and Safety Concerns

Should the presence of a guide dog or service animal provoke an allergy or a health and safety concern for other customers,

Switch Health will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all customers. Due diligence will be applied to address any health and safety requirements in coordination with the customer(s) and a supervisor.

For example, if a person's health and safety could be seriously affected by the presence of a service animal in an area that is open to the public, management will provide options for safely accommodating the service animal. Options could include creating distance between the two individuals to eliminate in-person contact, changing the time the two individuals receive service, or using air purifiers and other measures that could allow the person to use their service animal on the premises.

Pursuant to the Switch Health's obligations under the *Human Rights Code* and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, each customer's accommodation needs will be considered on a case-by-case basis, up to the point of undue hardship.

In a rare and exceptional circumstances where a service animal causes a serious disruption or a threat to the health and safety of others, and the animal's behaviour is not managed by the owner, management will ask that the service animal be removed from the premises.

As a courtesy, particularly if the person and service animal have been in attendance on the premises for a long time, employees may ask whether the animal requires water, and if necessary, may designate an area in which the service animal can relieve itself, or ask whether an employee can be of assistance pertaining to the needs of the service animal.

The Use of Support Persons

If a customer with a disability is accompanied by a support person, Switch Health will ensure that both persons may enter the premises together to receive goods and/or services during the entirety of the visit.

Should there be an issue with the availability of side-by-side space or seating, Switch Health will make every reasonable attempt to resolve the issue to ensure that the person with a disability and the support person remain together.

In situations where confidential information might be discussed, consent will be obtained from the person with a disability to share the confidential information in the presence of the support person.

Admission Fees

Where Switch Health requires a support person to accompany a person with a disability, and where the person with a disability has agreed to the accompaniment, Switch Health will not charge the support person any fees.

Notice of Disruptions in Service

Service disruptions may occur for reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of Switch Health. In the event of any unplanned events or temporary disruptions to facilities or services that customers with disabilities rely on to access or use goods or services, all reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice and to help accommodate the person with disabilities. If a notification needs to be posted, the following information will be included unless it is not readily available or known:

- Goods and/or services that are disrupted or unavailable;
- Reason for the disruption;
- Anticipated duration; and
- A description of alternative services or options.

Notification Options

When disruptions occur, Switch Health will provide notice by:

- Posting notices in noticeable locations, including at the point of disruption, at the main entrance, at the nearest accessible entrance to the service disruption, and on Switch Health's website;
- Contacting customers with appointments;
- Verbally notifying customers when they make a reservation or appointment; or
- By any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

Customer Feedback

Switch Health shall provide customers with the opportunity to provide feedback on the service provided to persons with disabilities. Information about the feedback process will be readily available to all customers and notice of the process will be made available on Switch Health website, www.switchhealth.ca. Feedback forms, along with alternate methods of providing feedback verbally (in person or by telephone) or written (handwritten, delivered, website, or e-mail), will be available upon request.

Submitting Feedback

Customers can submit feedback to:

Switch Health
1 (647) 977-1030
2600 Matheson Blvd E, Mississauga, ON L4W 4J1
feedback@switchhealth.ca

Customers who wish to provide feedback by completing an onsite customer feedback form or verbally can do so to any Switch Health employee.

Customers who provide formal feedback will receive acknowledgement of their feedback, along with any resulting actions based on concerns or complaints that were submitted.

Training

Training will be provided to:

- Every employee of Switch Health or a colleague or volunteer associated with Switch Health;

- Every person who participates in developing the policies of Switch Health; and
- Every other person who provides goods, services, or facilities on behalf of Switch Health.

Training Provisions

All Switch Health employee will receive training on the following:

- A review of the purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*;
- A review of the requirements of the customer service standards;
- Instructions on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
- Instructions on how to interact and help people with disabilities who:
 - Use assistive devices;
 - Require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal; or
 - Require the use of a support person (including the handling of admission fees);
- Instructions on how to use equipment or assistance devices that are available on our premises;
- Instructions on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing our good and/or services; and
- Switch Health policies, procedures, and practices pertaining to providing accessible customer service to customers with disabilities.

Training Schedule

Switch Health will provide training to all current and new employees, volunteers, agents, and contractors during orientation and within 30 days of hire. Revised training will be provided in the event of changes to legislation, procedures, policies, or practices.

Record of Training

Switch Health will keep a record of training that includes the dates, names and numbers of employees that received the training.

Notice of Availability and Format of Documents to Customers

Switch Health shall notify customers with disabilities that documents related to the customer service standards are available upon request and in a format that meets their unique needs. Customers will be notified by posting the information in a noticeable location on the premises where the goods and/or services are offered and on Switch Health's website.

Administration

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy, please contact:

Nikol Markovic, Director of Human Resources
1 (289) 334-0725
2600 Matheson Blvd E, Mississauga, ON L4W 4J1
accessibility@switchhealth.ca

This policy and its related procedures will be reviewed as required with new legislation and updates to Switch Health procedures.