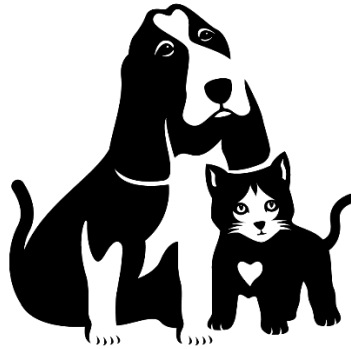


WHS Customer Service Accessibility Policy



WINNIPEG
HUMANE SOCIETY

Revised: February 2024

General Policy Statement:

The Winnipeg Humane Society (WHS) is committed to achieving accessibility and meeting the needs and abilities of all. In fulfilling this commitment, if the barrier to accessing our goods, services, or facility cannot be removed, we seek to provide alternate ways to access those. The WHS strives to provide access to its goods, services, and facility in a way that respects the dignity and independence of all. As part of our commitment to meeting the requirements of *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act*, the WHS will provide people with disabilities the same opportunities, in an accessible manner related to customer service, information and communication, employment, and use of public spaces.

Application:

This policy applies to all clients, donors, vendors, other service agencies, employees, management, and volunteers. The WHS values diversity and believes in inclusion, and this policy affirms the WHS commitment to accessibility and meets the requirements of applicable provincial accessibility and human rights legislation.

1. Meet Communication Needs

Policy Statement:

The WHS will meet the communication needs of our clients, donors, vendors, other service agencies, employees, management, and volunteers.

Practices and Measures:

- To meet communication needs, when appropriate we offer to communicate in diverse ways, such as taking time to understand and respond to what is needed, writing things down, reading things aloud, and taking extra time to explain things.
- Signs, documents, and electronic communications will use plain language and be easy to read.
- We will also:
 - keep paper and pens available to write things down.
 - offer a chair when longer conversations are needed.
 - offer a quieter space.
 - sit down to engage with someone using a wheelchair.
 - offer use of an onsite wheelchair should it be required.
- Publications are available in alternate formats on request.

2. Accommodate the Use of Assistive Devices

Policy Statement:

The WHS accommodates the use of assistive devices when clients, donors, vendors, other service agencies, employees, management, and volunteers are accessing our goods, services, or facility.

Practices and Measures:

- The WHS does not touch or move the assistive devices of clients, donors, vendors, other service agencies, employees, management, and volunteers without permission.
- In cases where the assistive device presents health or safety concerns, we will strive to mitigate such concerns or use other measures to ensure the person with disabilities can access our goods, services, and facility.
- Staff will be trained on how to use any assistive devices provided on site.

3. Support Persons

Policy Statement:

We welcome support people onto our premises.

A support person, as defined in the *Accessible Customer Service Standard*, means, in relation to a person who is disabled by a barrier, a person who accompanies the person to:

- a. support the person obtaining, using, or receiving help from a good or service provided by an organization; or
- b. aid the person in addressing their communication, mobility, personal care, or medical needs.

Practices and Measures:

- The WHS will address the person receiving our services not the support person, unless otherwise requested by the person requesting our services.
- The WHS will make space for support people on-site and ensure the person has access to their support persons.

4. Service Animals

Policy Statement:

We welcome service animals onto our premises.

Practices and Measures:

- The WHS:
 - treats a service animal as a working animal.
 - does not distract a service animal from its job.
 - will not distract a service animal from its job by petting, feeding, or playing with it, unless given permission by the person with the service animal to do so.
 - will know or know how to identify a service animal by its harness or vest and by the assistance the animal is providing.
- If we have concerns, we may ask if the animal is trained to help a person with a disability-related need.
- We do not inquire about the disability.
- We expect the person who is handling the service animal to maintain control of the animal physically or through voice, signal, or other means.
- If the service animal is showing signs of not being controlled (e.g., by barking, whining, or wandering), we may provide a warning to the handler to control the animal. If the service animal continues to misbehave, we may ask the handler to leave.

5. Maintain Accessibility Features

Policy Statement:

To ensure barrier free access to our goods, service, and facility the WHS maintains accessibility features so that they can be used as intended.

Practices and Measures:

- We organize our space so that there is room for people with wheelchairs, electric scooters, and walkers.
- Our seating accommodates people of varying sizes and abilities.
- We keep hallways, aisles, entrance, reception areas, waiting rooms and meeting rooms clear of clutter.
- We keep our entrance area clear of ice and snow.
- We place standing signs out of the way to avoid tripping hazards.
- We use both audio and visual cues to inform customers it is their turn to be served.
- Our accessibility features affected by this policy include accessible washrooms, hallways, aisles, automatic external doors, doorbells, ramps, and the entrance area clear of ice and snow.

6. Let the Public Know When and Why an Accessibility Feature is Unavailable

Policy Statement:

We let the public know when and why an accessibility feature is temporarily unavailable, how long it will be unavailable, and other ways to access our goods, services, or facility.

Practices and Measures:

- If one of our accessibility features becomes temporarily unavailable, we prepare and post a notice and/or announcement about the disruption, the reason for the disruption, how long it will last, and whether there are other ways we can provide access to our goods and services (e.g., by using an alternate entrance).
- If requested, we work with the customer to find other ways to provide goods and services.
- We let the public know about disruptions in the following ways:
 - posted on website, and/or social media.
 - posted at our building entrance, and/or service reception desk.
 - included in posters, brochures, pamphlets and/or advertisements.
 - through employees, volunteers, or management (in person, by phone or through recorded greetings).
 - through the intercom.

7. Welcome and Respond Promptly to Feedback

Policy Statement:

The WHS will welcome and respond promptly to feedback we receive on the accessibility of our goods, services, and facilities.

We document the actions we take to respond to the feedback we receive, and that information is available on request in a format that meets the individual's communication needs.

Practices and Measures:

- The WHS invites feedback in the following ways:
 - email to HR@Winnipeghumanesociety.ca
 - letter mail: Winnipeg Humane Society, 45 Hurst Way, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3T 0R3
 - telephone: HR Manager at 204-988-8806

- All feedback is directed to the HR Manager who determines what action, if any, should occur. If the feedback requires us to follow-up, the person who provided the feedback is notified that the request is being reviewed and when they can expect a response.

- Any communication needs of the individual will be respected in these responses. Actions taken in response to feedback will be documented by the WHS.

8. Provide the Required Training to Employees, Volunteers, Management

Policy Statement:

The WHS provides the required training on accessible customer service to employees, volunteers, and management. We are trained on:

- How to interact and communicate with people who face barriers to accessing goods, services, and facility, use assistive devices, are assisted by a support person and/or are assisted by a service animal.
- How to use any equipment or assistive devices (wheelchair) that are available onsite.
- An overview of *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act*, *The Human Rights Code*, and the *Customer Service Standard*.
- Training will occur ongoingly and whenever relevant policies, practices, and procedures are changed.

Practices and Measures:

- We train new employees, volunteers, and management within two weeks, after hiring.
- We provide refresher training regularly, including updates to policies, practices, and measures.
- HR Coordinator is to record who has taken training and when.
- Feedback on the accessibility of our goods and services is addressed in regular staff meetings.

9. Keep a Written Record of Accessibility and Training Policies

Policy Statement:

The WHS will keep a written record of our accessibility and training policies. Our written documents include a summary of our training material and when training is offered. We let the public know that our written policies are available on request.

Practices and Measures:

- We let the public know that our accessibility and training policies are available in the following ways:
 - posted on websites, on social media, and/or in newsletters.
 - posted at our building entrance, service reception desk, and/or in high traffic areas.

- We provide our policies within a reasonable timeframe, at no cost, and in a format that meets the needs of the individual.