



The Home Depot Canada Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy

Updated November 28, 2011

1. INTRODUCTION

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (the “Act”) became law on June 13, 2005. Under this legislation, the government of Ontario is in the process of developing accessibility standards that identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities in key areas of daily living. These standards apply to private and public organizations across Ontario, including The Home Depot.

The goal of the Act is to create a more accessible Ontario, by identifying, and to the extent possible, preventing and eliminating barriers experienced by persons with disabilities.

The Accessible Customer Service Standard (the “Standard”) has been established under the Act to ensure goods and services are, where at all possible, equally accessible to every member of the public.

At The Home Depot Canada, we are committed to providing an environment that is, and feels, accessible for all people. In alignment with our core values of Respect for all People and Excellent Customer Service, we are committed to providing barrier-free, exceptional customer service to all, including persons with disabilities.

2. ASSOCIATES AFFECTED

This policy applies to all associates who deal with members of the public or third parties in Ontario.

This policy also applies to all persons responsible for the development, implementation, or oversight of The Home Depot Canada’s policies, practices and procedures.

3. DEFINITIONS

- i. **Disability** – Defined under the Act as:
 - 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 coordination, 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 a 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.
- ii. **Assistive Device** – Any device used to assist a person in performing a particular task or tasks or to aid that person in activities of daily living.
- iii. **Service animal** – An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability, if:
 - it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
 - the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.
- iv. **Support person** – A person who accompanies a person with a disability to assist with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

4. CORE PRINCIPLES OF THE POLICY

We endeavour to ensure that the Policy and related practices, policies and procedures are consistent with the following four (4) core principles:

- i. **Dignity** – Persons with disabilities must be treated as valued customers as deserving of service as any other customer.
- ii. **Equality of Opportunity** – Persons with disabilities should be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from our goods and services.
- iii. **Integration** – Wherever possible, persons with disabilities should benefit from our goods and services in the same place and in the same or similar manner as any other customer. In circumstances where integration does not serve the needs of the person with a disability, goods

and services will, to the extent possible, be provided in another way that takes into account the person's individual needs and aligns with the four (4) core principles.

- iv. **Independence** – Goods and services must be provided in a way that respects the independence of persons with disabilities. To this end, we will always be willing to assist a person with a disability, but will not do so without the express permission of the person.

5. PROVIDING GOODS AND SERVICES TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

I. Policies, Practices and Procedures

The Home Depot Canada shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures that impact the delivery of its goods and services to the public or to other third parties, are consistent with the principles of dignity, equality of opportunity, integration and independence as defined above.

To this end, The Home Depot Canada has developed this Policy and amended its following customer service related policies:

- HS-045-S-2.1E: Dogs and Other Domestic Pets Standard

We have also made amendments to the following practices:

- Included alt-tags on all images within our website so that they will be compatible with reading software: www.homedepot.ca

II. Communication

a. Accessible Mediums of Communication

The Home Depot strives to communicate with members of the public in a manner that is accessible. Mediums of communication currently employed include:

- i. www.HomeDepot.ca: A website that provides information in clear plain language in both written and auditory format, and that can easily be navigated and understood by customers using accessibility software
- ii. Web forms on the Company website to provide feedback to key departments and personnel within the Home Depot
- iii. Certain, key signage in store locations that provides information in Braille
- iv. Certain, key signage in store locations in large, clear, and high contrast lettering
- v. Associates in store trained in serving a wide range of customers, including persons with disabilities.

b. Communicating with Persons with disabilities

The Home Depot Canada strives to communicate with persons with disabilities in a manner that takes into account the disability. Approaches for communication are set out in our accessibility training program: Serving Customers with Disabilities. All persons to whom this policy applies will receive training on how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.

III. Assistive Devices

Persons with disabilities are permitted, where possible, to use their own Assistive Device when on our premises for the purposes of obtaining, using or benefiting from our goods and services.

If there is a physical, technological, or other type of barrier that prevents the use of an Assistive Device on our premises, we will first endeavour to remove that barrier. If we are not able to remove the barrier, we will ask the person how he or she can be accommodated and what alternative methods of service would be more accessible to him/her. We will make our best efforts to provide an alternative means of assistance for the person with a disability.

All persons to whom this policy applies will receive training on various Assistive Devices that may be used by persons with disabilities while accessing The Home Depot goods and services.

IV. Accessibility at Our Premises

The following facilities and services are offered at some of The Home Depot stores to which the Policy applies to enable persons with disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from its goods and services:

- Scooter with a basket
- Manual wheelchair

In addition, each The Home Depot store offers one-on-one support from associates to access products or to respond to questions

All persons to whom this policy applies will receive training on identifying facilities or services made available on The Home Depot premises to assist persons with disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from The Home Depot goods and services.

V. Service Animals

Persons with disabilities may enter premises owned and/or operated by The Home Depot accompanied by a Service Animal and keep the Service Animal with them if the public has access to such premises and the Service Animal is not otherwise excluded by law.

All persons to whom this Policy applies will receive training on how to interact with persons with disabilities accompanied by a Service Animal.

VI. Support Persons

A person with a disability may enter premises owned and/or operated by The Home Depot Canada with a Support Person and have access to the Support Person while on the premises.

The Home Depot Canada may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a Support Person where it is necessary to protect the health and/or safety of the person with a disability or the health and/or safety of others on the premises.

All persons to whom this Policy applies will receive training on how to interact with persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a Support Person.

VII. Notice of Temporary Disruption

The Home Depot Canada will notify customers if there is a planned or unexpected disruption of a service that persons with disabilities use to access its goods and services. The notice will be posted in a conspicuous location at the applicable premises. If the disruption relates to accessibility of content on www.homedepot.ca, or our customer care line, notification will be posted on the home page of The Home Depot website.

The notice will include the following information:

- i. That a facility or service is unavailable
- ii. The anticipated duration of the disruption
- iii. The reason for the disruption
- iv. Alternative facilities or services, if available.

6. TRAINING AND RECORDS

The Home Depot Canada will provide training, and ongoing training as required under the Standard to all persons to whom this Policy applies.

Training will include:

- i. A review of the purpose of the Act and requirements of the Standard
- ii. A review of the Policy
- iii. How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities
- iv. How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an Assistive Device or require the assistance of a Service Animal or Support Person
- v. How to use equipment or devices made available on our premises to assist persons with disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services
- vi. What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing our premises and/or services.

Training will be provided to all persons to whom this Policy applies as soon as practicable after he or she is assigned the applicable duties.

Records of the training provided, including the training protocol, the dates on which the training is provided and the number of individuals to whom the training is provided shall be maintained in accordance with the requirements of the Standard.

7. FEEDBACK PROCEDURE

The Home Depot Canada welcomes and appreciates feedback regarding this Policy and its implementation. Feedback can be provided in the following ways:

- i. In person at any The Home Depot store
- ii. By telephone to our Customer Care team at: 1-800-668-2266
- iii. In writing to:
Customer Care
900 – 1 Concorde Gate
Toronto, ON
M3C 4H9
- iv. Electronically to customercare_Canada@homedepot.com

Where possible, we will respond to feedback within five (5) business days of the date that it is received.

In certain circumstances, specific action may be required to effectively address feedback, including but not limited to conducting an internal investigation and/or review of The Home Depot policies, practices and procedures. In such circumstances the customer will receive an acknowledgement that their feedback has been received within five (5) business days and The Home Depot Canada will respond as soon as is practicable thereafter. In any event, feedback will be provided to the appropriate policy or procedure owner and any required changes will be made within a reasonable period of time.

8. DOCUMENTATION TO BE MADE AVAILABLE

This Policy, and related practices and protocols, shall be made available to any member of the public upon request.

Notification of same shall be posted on The Home Depot Canada website and at a conspicuous place at each premise to which this Policy applies.

9. FORMAT OF DOCUMENTS

The Home Depot Canada will provide documents, or the information contained in documents, required to be provided under the Standard, to a person with a disability in a format that takes the person's disability into account.

10. QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS POLICY

For more information about the Policy or for questions regarding The Home Depot policies, practices and procedures for accessible customer service, please contact:

- i. Any The Home Depot store
- ii. By telephone to our Customer Care team at: 1-800-668-2266
- iii. In writing to:
Customer Care
900 – 1 Concorde Gate
Toronto, ON
M3C 4H9
- iv. Electronically to customercare_Canada@homedepot.com