

## NAS Accessible Customer Service Policy

This policy is consistent with the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service* (Customer Service Standard) made under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*.

### Purpose and Commitment

NAS (the “Company”) is committed to maintaining an accessible environment for persons with disabilities in the delivery of its goods and services. The Company will use all reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of its services to persons with disabilities are consistent with the following principles:

- goods and services are provided in a way that respects the **dignity and independence** of persons with disabilities;
- **integration** - persons with disabilities are able to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other clients;
- persons with disabilities **have opportunities equal to others** to obtain, use and benefit from the Company’s goods or services.

### Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

“**Disability**” means,

- a) 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,
- b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d) a mental disorder, or
- e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

## **Application of Policy**

This policy applies to Company services that are provided externally to the public or third parties. The policy applies to all staff at the Company, agents, volunteers, clients, and visitors to the Company. All areas of the Company are accountable for providing accessibility to persons with disabilities.

## **Providing goods and services to persons with disabilities**

The Company is committed to excellence in serving all clients, including persons with disabilities, and will carry out its functions and responsibilities by,

- communicating with persons with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.
- serving persons with disabilities who use assistive devices. The Company will provide its staff with training on how to use the assistive devices available on the Company premises.
- ensuring that persons with disabilities who are accompanied by their guide dog or other service animals are permitted to enter the premises of the Company with the animal and to keep the animal with them, unless the animal is excluded by law from the premises.
- ensuring that persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person are permitted to enter the Company's premises with their support person. At no time will persons with disabilities who are accompanied by their support person be prevented from having access to their support person while on the Company premises.

## **Modifications to this or other policies**

The Company will provide training on an ongoing basis when changes are made to the Company's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities.

Changes will not be made to this policy unless the impact of the changes on persons with disabilities has been considered.

Any Company policy that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities will be modified or removed.

### **Maintenance of documents**

The Company will maintain documents describing its policies, practices and procedures and, upon request, shall give a copy of a document to any person.

The Company will notify persons to whom it provides goods and services of its policies, by posting the information at a conspicuous place on the Company premises, and/or on the Company website or by such method as is reasonable under the circumstances.

When required under this Policy to give a copy of a document to a person with disabilities, the Company will provide the document or information in a format that takes into account the person's disabilities (e.g. hard copy, hard copy in large print, diskette, etc.).

This policy and its related procedures will be reviewed as required in the event of legislative changes.

### **Questions or feedback?**

You may submit feedback via email:

[accessibilityfeedback@nationwideappraisals.com](mailto:accessibilityfeedback@nationwideappraisals.com)

Contact Human Resources:

Sonja Woodrow, Senior Manager, Human Resources  
80 Micro Court, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor  
Markham, ON L3R 9Z5  
1-888-477-9776, ext. 326  
[Sonja.woodrow@nationwideappraisals.com](mailto:Sonja.woodrow@nationwideappraisals.com)

## Glossary of Terms

**Accessibility** – Accessibility is the degree to which persons with disabilities can access a device, service or environment without barriers. Accessibility is also a process - it is the proactive identification, removal and prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities.

**Accessibility Standards** – Regulations or rules created under AODA that provide minimum levels for improving accessibility to meet the goals of AODA across the province.

**Annual Accessibility Report** – A report that a person or organization must file if an accessibility standard applies to the person or organization.

**Goods and Services** – Goods are tangible things (e.g. laptop), while services are things that someone does for you but are not tangible (e.g. legal advice).

**“Guide dog”** is 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 or visually impaired.

**Policy** – The term Policy refers to NAS’s Customer Service Accessibility Policy

**Public Sector Organizations** – These organizations include the Legislative Assembly, ministries of the provincial government of Ontario and Ontario municipalities. Also included are most boards, commissions, authorities and agencies.

**Personal Assistive Devices** – Devices that a client may bring with them to a meeting.

**“Service animal”** as defined in Ontario Regulation 429/07, means an animal for a person with disabilities where it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability or where the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the he or she requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

**Support Person** – In relation to a person with disability as another person who accompanies him or her in order to assist with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services

### **Reference Documents:**

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005  
Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07  
Blind Person’s Rights Act, 1990  
Dog Owners’ Liability Act, Ontario  
Food Safety and Quality Act 2001, Ontario Regulation 31/05  
Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562  
Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990

## **Customer Service Standards Policies, Practices and Procedures**

### **General Principles**

In accordance with the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*, this policy addresses the following:

- A. The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities;
- B. The Use of Assistive Devices
- C. The Use of Guide Dogs, Service Animals and Service Dogs
- D. The Use of Support Persons
- E. Notice of Service Disruptions
- F. Customer Feedback
- G. Training
- H. Notice of Availability and Format of Required Documents

### **A. The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities**

NAS will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity by:

- ensuring that all customers receive the same value and quality;
- allowing customers with disabilities to do things in their own ways, at their own pace when accessing goods and services as long as this does not present a safety risk;
- using alternative methods when possible to ensure that customers with disabilities have access to the same services, in the same place and in a similar manner;
- taking into account individual needs when providing goods and services; and
- communicating in a manner that takes into account the customer's disability.

### **B. Assistive Devices**

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing goods or services provided by NAS.

In cases where the assistive device presents a safety concern or where accessibility might be an issue, other reasonable measures will be used to ensure the access of goods and services.

- For example in application, open flames and oxygen tanks cannot be near one another. Therefore, the accommodation of a customer with an oxygen tank may involve ensuring the

customer is in a location that would be considered safe for both the customer and business.

- Or, where elevators are not present and where an individual requires assistive devices for the purposes of mobility, service will be provided in a location that meets the needs of the customer.

### **C. Guide Dogs, Service Animals and Service Dogs**

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

**Food Service Areas:**

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

Other types of service animals are not permitted into food service areas due to the *Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562 Section 60*.

#### **Exclusion Guidelines:**

If a guide dog, service animal or service dog is excluded by law (see applicable laws below) NAS will offer alternative methods to enable the person with a disability to access goods and services, when possible (for example, securing the animal in a safe location and offering the guidance of an employee).

#### **Applicable Laws:**

*Food Safety and Quality Act 2001, Ontario Regulation 31/05:* Makes an exception for service dogs to allow them in those areas.

The *Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562 Section 60*, normally does not allow animals in places where food is manufactured, prepared, processed, handled, served, displayed, stored, sold or offered for sale. It does allow guide dogs and service dogs to go into places where food is served, sold or offered for sale. However, other types of service animals are not included in this exception.

*Dog Owners' Liability Act, Ontario:* If there is a conflict between a provision of this Act 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.

Recognizing a Guide Dog, Service Dog and/or Service Animal:

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used by the customer for reasons relating to his or her disability, NAS may request verification from the customer. Verification may include:

- a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons related to the disability;
- a valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada; or,
- a certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school.

#### Care and Control of the Animal:

The customer that is accompanied by a guide dog, service dog and/or service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all times.

#### Allergies:

If a health and safety concern presents itself for example in the form of a severe allergy to the animal, NAS will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals.

### **D. Support Persons**

If a customer with a disability is accompanied by a support person, NAS will ensure that both persons are allowed to enter the premises together and that the customer is not prevented from having access to the support person.

In situations where confidential information might be discussed, consent will be obtained from the customer, prior to any conversation where confidential information might be discussed in presence of the support person.

#### **Admission Fees:**

Although this is not applicable practice to accessing our standard goods and services, in the event payment is required by a support person for admission to the premises NAS will ensure that notice is given in advance by posting notice of admission fees for support persons where fees are posted.

### **E. Notice of Disruptions in Service**

Service disruptions may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of NAS. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services that customer's with disabilities rely on to access or use NAS's goods or services, reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice. In some circumstances such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruptions, advance notice may not be possible.

In the event that a notification needs to be posted the following information will be included unless it is not readily available or known:

- goods or services that are disrupted or unavailable
- reason for the disruption
- anticipated duration
- a description of alternative services or options

When disruptions occur, NAS will provide notice by:

- posting notices in conspicuous places including at the point of disruption, at the main entrance and the nearest accessible entrance to the service disruption and/or on the NAS website;
- contacting customers with appointments;
- verbally notifying customers when they are making an appointment; or
- by any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

## **F. Feedback Process**

NAS will provide customers with the opportunity to provide feedback on the service provided to customers with disabilities. Information about the feedback process will be readily available to all customers and notice of the process will be made available on the company website.

Feedback forms along with alternate methods of providing feedback such as verbally (in person or by telephone) or written (hand written, delivered, website or email), will be available upon request. Customers who wish to provide feedback by completing an onsite customer feedback form or verbally can do so to any NAS employee.

**Customers can submit to:** [accessibilityfeedback@nationwideappraisals.com](mailto:accessibilityfeedback@nationwideappraisals.com)

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

Questions on our policies may also be directed to Human Resources:

Sonja Woodrow, Senior Manager, Human Resources  
80 Micro Court, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor  
Markham, ON L3R 9Z5  
1-888-477-9776, ext. 326  
[Sonja.woodrow@nationwideappraisals.com](mailto:Sonja.woodrow@nationwideappraisals.com)



## G. Training

Training will be provided to:

- a) all employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractors who deal with the public or other third parties that act on behalf of NAS
- b) those who are involved in the development and approval of customer service policies, practices and procedures

As reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, regardless of the format, training will cover the following:

- A review of the purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.
- A review of the requirements of the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07*.
- Instructions on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.
- Instructions on how to interact with people with disabilities who:
  - use assistive devices;
  - require the assistance of a guide dog, service 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 devices that are available at our premises or that we provide that may help people with disabilities.
- Instructions on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing your services.
- NAS's policies, procedures and practices pertaining to providing accessible customer service to customers with disabilities.

NAS will provide training as soon as practicable. Training will be provided to new employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractor who deal with the public or act on our behalf as part of their orientation. Revised training will be provided in the event of changes to legislation, procedures and/or practices.

NAS will keep a record of training that includes the dates training was provided and names of those in attendance.



80 Micro Court, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor  
Markham, Ontario L3R 9Z5  
Tel: (905) 882 8349 / (888) 477 9776  
Fax: (905) 882 0451 / (866) 477 9519  
[www.nationwideappraisals.com](http://www.nationwideappraisals.com)

## **H. Notice of Availability and Format of Documents**

NAS shall notify customers that the documents related to the *Accessibility Standard for Customer Service* are available upon request and in a format that takes into account the customer's disability.

Every effort will be made to process requests in a timely fashion. Notification will be given by posting the information in a conspicuous place owned and operated by NAS, the website and/or any other reasonable method.



## NAS - FEEDBACK FORM

Thank you for visiting/contacting NAS. We value all of our clients/customers and strive to meet everyone's needs.

**Please tell us the date and time of your visit or other contact with us:**

---

**Did we respond to your customer service needs today?**

\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

**Was our customer service provided to you in an accessible manner?**

\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

**Did you have any problems accessing our goods and services?**

\_\_\_ Yes (Please explain below) \_\_\_ Somewhat (Please explain below) \_\_\_ No

---

---

---

**Please add any other comments that you may have:**

---

---

---

**Your contact information (Optional):**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_