



Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)	Scope and Purpose
	October 1, 2011

Scope and Purpose

Through the establishment of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service policy and supporting procedures and practices that respect the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities, Tribute communities is reflecting its commitment to sound governance, accountability and focus on service excellence in fulfilling its mission to always strive to meet or exceed expectations.

Tribute Communities is committed in giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access its good and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other customers. To ensure support for and compliance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and relevant regulations, Tribute Communities will make reasonable efforts to ensure that it provides accessible customer service to people with various kinds of disabilities and respects the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity , as defined herein.

Definitions

Taken from the Guide to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07

Assistive Device:

For the purpose of this policy, shall mean an auxiliary aid such as communication aid, cognition aid, personal mobility aid and medical aid (i.e. canes, crutches, wheelchairs, hearing aids etc.) to access and benefit from the goods and services offered by Tribute Communities.

Barrier:

For the purpose of this policy, means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of the disability. Barriers may include a physical, architectural and attitudinal barrier as well as, an information or communication barrier, technological barrier, a policy, procedure or a practice.

Disability:

For the purpose of this policy, the term “disability” includes:

- 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 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.

Employee:

For the purpose of this policy, the term “employee” refers to any person regarding whom Tribute Communities pays wages or a salary, has control over their assigned work and has a right to control the details of their work. This includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Full-time employees
- b. Part-time employees
- c. Seasonal employees
- d. Contract employees

Service Animal:

For the purpose of this policy, an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability:

- a. If it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability, or
- b. If the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

“Service animal” also includes a guide dog as defined under the Blind Persons’ Rights Act Section 1.



Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)	Policy and Procedure
	October 1, 2011

Support Person:

For the purpose of this policy, a “support person” is a person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services. The support person could be a paid personal support worker, a volunteer, a friend or a family member. He or she does not necessarily need to have special training or qualifications.

Principles

Dignity – Service is provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to maintain self respect and the respect of other people.

Equal Opportunity – service is provided to a person with a disability in such a way that they have an opportunity to access the services provided by Tribute Communities or services equal to that given to others.

Independence – when a person with a disability has the freedom to do things on their own without unnecessary help or interference from others.

Integration – services provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in the same or similar way as other customers, unless an alternate measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability to access goods or services.

Policy Provisions

Accessible Communication

Tribute Communities and its employees shall communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account each person’s particular disability.



Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)	Policy and Procedure
	October 1, 2011

Should Tribute Communities be requested to provide a person with a disability a public document or information, Tribute Communities shall take into consideration the communication needs of the person with a disability and provide the information to the person with a disability in a format that is agreed upon.

In-house printed material and publications produced on behalf of Tribute Communities should contain a note indicating “alternative formats are available upon request” and include the relevant contact information.

If one form or method of communication cannot be used by a person with disability, he/she may be able to use another form or method, or a combination.

When communicating with a person with a disability ensure you confirm with him or her they understand the information being presented.

Accessible Customer Service

Tribute Communities shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, procedures and practices are amended from time to time are consistent with the following principles by establishing a set of Guidelines in support of this policy.

- a) The goods or services shall be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- b) The provisions of goods or services to persons with disabilities and others shall be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services.
- c) Persons with a disability shall be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods and services.



Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)	Policy and Procedure
	October 1, 2011

Service Animals

Unless otherwise prohibited by law, persons with disabilities shall be permitted to be accompanied by a service animal or support person;

- a. Where services are provided at premises owned or operated by Tribute Communities and
- b. Where the public or third parties normally have access to such premises

For the purposes of these Guidelines and in support of the Corporate Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy a service animal for a person with a disability is :

- a) if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
- b) if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for the reasons relating to the disability.

Where a service animal is excluded by law from the premises, the reason why the animal is excluded shall be explained to the person with a disability.

Tribute Communities staff may request a letter from a physician or nurse confirming the person who requires the assistance of a service animal or guide dog to validate that the animal is as defined above by producing a certificate.

The guide dog or service animal must be in the care and control of the person with a disability while accessing goods and services at Tribute Communities.

Staff shall not touch, handle, feed or speak to the guide dog or service animal.

If Tribute Communities and/or its staff are providing ongoing services to a person with a service animal or in other special circumstances, Tribute Communities may request to maintain a copy of the letter. A copy of the letter should only be kept when necessary and only for as long as necessary. Collection of this information must adhere to all privacy and protection acts.



Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)	Policy and Procedure
	October 1, 2011

Support Persons

Tribute Communities shall allow a person with a disability, who requires, to be accompanied by a support person into all Tribute Communities premises that are owned or operated as public facilities. Both persons shall be permitted to enter the premises together and the person with a disability shall have access to their support person.

Staff shall direct all communication to the person directly and not to the support person, unless instructed to do so by the person with the disability.

Any confidential information such as tax information, personal information etc. that is discussed in the presence of the support person shall be identified as such prior to the information being released and the person with the disability shall determine if the information can be released in the presence of the support person. In some incidences where the confidentiality is important because of the nature of the information being discussed, the support person may be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

Assistive Devices

Tribute Communications is committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices. We shall endeavor to become familiar with the various assistive devices used by people with disabilities and shall be flexible in facilitating their use by people with disabilities to access our goods and services.

Tribute Communities permits persons with disabilities to use and keep with them their own personal assistive device to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services offered by Tribute Communities.

A person with disability may use an assistive device such as, but not limited to, wheelchairs, walkers, white canes use by people that are blind or who have low vision, note taking devices, portable magnifiers, recording machines, assistive listening devices, personal oxygen tanks and devices for gasping.



Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)	Policy and Procedure
	October 1, 2011

When interacting with a person with disability who may use one or more assistive device:

- Ensure the person is permitted to enter the premises with the device and to use the device to access goods and services.
- Do not lean or reach over an assistive device
- Remove potential barriers to the use of assistive devices where possible.

Disruption in Service

Tribute Communities shall post timely public notice of a current or anticipated disruption in any facilities or services we provide to enable people with disabilities to access our services. This notice shall include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, description of alternative facilities or services, if available and contact information.

Notice may be given by posting information in a conspicuous place on the premises, on the company's website or any other such method as is reasonable in the circumstances.

Training

Tribute Communications shall ensure the following persons shall or have received training regarding the provision of its goods and services to persons with disabilities.

- a. All its employees, volunteers, agents, and others who could reasonably be expected to interact with the public or third parties on behalf of Tribute Communities.
- b. All those who are in the development, approval, monitoring or implementation of Tribute Communities customer service policies, practices and procedures about the provision of goods and services to the public and/or third parties.



Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)	Policy and Procedure
	October 1, 2011

Training shall be provided to each person as soon as practicable and training records shall be maintained to ensure compliance with the legislation.

The training shall include , but is not limited to the following:

- a. A review of the purpose of the AODA and the requirements of its Customer Service Standard.
- b. How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability.
- c. How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person.
- d. How to use equipment or devices available on Tribute Communities' premises or otherwise provided by Tribute Communities that may help with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability.
- e. What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the provider's goods or services.

Feedback Process

Tribute Communities shall establish a process for receiving and responding to feedback from anyone about the manner in which it provides goods or services to persons with disabilities. Information about this process shall be made readily available to the public.

The feedback process shall permit persons to provide their feedback in person, by telephone, in writing, or by delivering an electronic text by e-mail or on diskette or otherwise.

The feedback process shall specify the actions to be taken by Tribute Communications in the event that a complaint is received. A response shall be provided by the person making the complaint within 5 working days.



Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)	Policy and Procedure
	October 1, 2011

Responsibilities

Tribute Communications is responsible for reviewing this Policy annually and recommending amendments to ensure on-going compliance with regulated accessibility standards and legislated obligations. Tribute Communications shall provide advice and direction on the implementation of this Policy.

Supervisors and managers shall ensure that they and their employees are familiar with this Policy.

Monitoring and Contraventions

Supervisors and managers shall monitor current practices to ensure compliance. Failure to comply with this Policy may result in disciplinary action, up to an including dismissal.

Feedback

Tribute communities shall establish a process for receiving and responding to feedback regarding the manner in which it provides goods or services to persons with disabilities and shall make information about the process readily available to the public.

The feedback process shall permit persons to provide feedback in person, by telephone, in writing, by email, online, on disk or by other method.

Notice of Availability of and Format of Documents

Tribute Communities shall provide notice that upon request it shall provide a copy of the following policies, procedures and practices required under Ontario Regulation 429/07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service to any person.

- Tribute Communities’ policies, procedures and practices on the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities – including a policy on the use of personal assistive devices by persons with disabilities to access its goods and services.



Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)	Policy and Procedure
	October 1, 2011

- Service animals and support persons – Policy, procedures and practices with respect to the entry of service animals and support persons to those areas of the premises that are owned and operated by Tribute Communities, where such are open to the public and customers.
- Notice of temporary disruption – the steps that will be taken in connection with a temporary planned or unexpected disruption to facilities or services that persons with disabilities usually use to access Tribute Communities’ goods or services.
- Training – description of the Tribute Communities’ policy on providing training on accessible customer service.
- Feedback Process – description of the process for receiving and responding to feedback on the manner in which Tribute Communities provides goods or services to people with disabilities.

Format of Documents

Should Tribute Communities be requested to provide a person with a disability any document noted in this section, Tribute Communities shall give the person the information contained in the document , in a format that takes in to account the person’s disability.

If a person with a disability asks for a document in a different format, staff shall discuss what options are available to the individual and then agree upon the format that shall be provided.