

Voortman Cookies Limited

Accessibility Standards for Ontarians with Disabilities

-Customer Service Standards-

Voortman Cookies Limited

Customer Service Policy For Ontarians with Disabilities

Definition

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act was passed in 2005. Its goal is to make Ontario accessible for people with disabilities. Through province-wide accessibility standards, we will improve accessibility by identifying, breaking down and preventing barriers to accessibility.

There are five accessibility standards that will come into effect over the coming years. They are as follows:

- Customer Service
- Employment
- Information and Communication
- Built Environment
- Transportation

The accessibility standards for customer service is the first standard to be released and is effective January 1, 2012.

Barrier:

Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or practice.

Disability:

- 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 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 *Workers Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

People with disabilities should have the same opportunities as everyone else. They should be able to do the same things that most of us take for granted like go to work or school, shop or use transit. People with disabilities should benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in a similar way as other customers that respects both their dignity and independence.

Policy Statement

Voortman Cookies Limited is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities. The purpose of this policy is to establish planned procedures for all employees of Voortman Cookies Limited to abide by when delivering services to people with disabilities, in compliance with the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O. Reg. 429/07, made under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure Voortman Cookies goods and services are provided in a way that:

- respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities;
- provides goods and services to people with disabilities in an integrated manner with those who do not have disabilities unless an alternative measure is necessary. The alternative measure may be temporary or permanent;
- communicates with a person with a disability in a manner that takes his or her disability into account;
- is sensitive to an individual's needs;
- permits people with disabilities to use assistive devices, service animals and/or support persons as is necessary to access Voortman Cookies Limited goods and services.
- allows equal opportunity for people with disabilities

Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities

Voortman Cookies is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities and we will make all reasonable attempts to carry out functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

Communication can occur either by mail or fax, verbally by phone, or electronically by email.

We will train staff who communicate with customers on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

Telephone Services

We are committed to attempting to provide fully accessible telephone service to our customers. We will train staff to communicate with customers over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly.

We will communicate with customers in person, by email or mail if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

Assistive Devices

Definition:

- 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 to the facility such as a wheelchair, walker, personal oxygen tank or anything that might assist in hearing, seeing, communication, moving, remembering and/or reading.

Should a customer of Voortman Cookies Limited require the use of an assistive device, they shall be permitted to use their assistive device as required. We will make all reasonable efforts to serve people with disabilities who use assisted devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services. We will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that our staff is trained and familiar with various assisted devices that may be used by our customers with disabilities while accessing our goods or services.

Service Animals

Definition:

- As reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, 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 if the person provides a letter from their physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal in the Voortman Cookies Limited office and/or retail store. We will also make every reasonable effort to ensure that all staff dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

Support Persons

Definition:

- As reflected in *Ontario Regulation 429/07*, a support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to goods and services.

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter Voortman Cookies premises with his or her support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on our premises.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

Voortman Cookies Limited will provide customers with notice as soon as possible in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. The notice will be placed at all public entrances of our premises and communicated in the best way possible for people with disabilities.

Training for Staff

Voortman Cookies Limited will make all reasonable efforts to provide training to all employees who deal with, the public or other third parties who may have a disability.

This training will be provided within a reasonable time period after assuming any position in which the worker may encounter/deal with a person with a disability.

Training will consist of either a handout/ information package, formal one on one training or electronic media viewing. Training will include the following:

- The purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the requirements of the customer service standard
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or support person.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Voortman Cookies goods and services

Applicable staff will be trained on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way goods and services are provided to people with disabilities. Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

Voortman Cookies Limited will make a reasonable effort to communicate to all plant employees, who do not receive formal training, so that they have an understanding of our policy on people with disabilities and the Accessibility Standards for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Feedback Process

The ultimate goal of Voortman Cookies Limited is to meet the customer service expectations while serving customers with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way Voortman Cookies provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made in person, over the phone, by email or mail. All feedback should be directed to the Consumer Affairs Coordinator or the Human Resources Department. Customers can expect to hear back in a timely manner.

All feedback can be made to:

Consumer Affairs Coordinator
4475 North Service Road
Burlington, Ontario
L7L 4X7

OR

Human Resources Department
4455 North Service Road
Burlington, Ontario
L7L 4X7

Phone: (905) 335-9500

Fax: (905) 332-5499 OR (905) 335-0134

Email: info@voortman.com (attn: Consumer Affairs Coordinator OR HR Department)

Complaints will be addressed according to the nature and severity of the issue, and based on the results, it will be decided if an infraction was committed or if policies need to be revised.

Modifications to Policy

We are committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Therefore no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities. Any policy of Voortman Cookies that does not respect and promote the dignity of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

Questions about this Policy

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to customers with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of a policy is not understood, an explanation should be provided by, or referred to, the Consumer Affairs Coordinator or the Human Resources Department.

Reference Documentation

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07
- Food Safety and Quality Act 2001, Ontario Regulations 31/05
- Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990

Policy Review

Voortman Cookies Limited will review this policy on a yearly basis to determine whether any revisions or additions need to be made.