

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2018-2023

Introduction

Qualico is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities. Qualico is governed by *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA)*, and aims at ensuring that its programs and services are fully accessible to people with disabilities. Under the AMA and its regulations five accessibility standards will be developed in stages according to a legislated timeframe for implementation. The standards will include:

1. The **Accessible Customer Service Standard**, being the first established standard, as set out in this policy statement.
2. The **Accessible Information and Communications** standard to address the removal of barriers in access to information.
3. The **Accessible Built Environment** standard to access into and within buildings and outdoor spaces involving amendments to Manitoba's Building Code.
4. The **Employment Accessibility** standard to address paid employment practices relating to employer-employee relationships involving recruitment, hiring and retention policies.
5. The **Accessible Transportation** standard to address aspects of accessible public transportation.

Qualico Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

Qualico strives at all times to provide goods, services or facilities in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities, and of the same quality received by others. Qualico is also committed to ensuring that, to the extent possible, accessible goods, services or facilities are delivered in a timely manner. This policy has been prepared to meet the compliance requirements of The Accessibility Customer Service Standard under the AMA.

Our accessible customer service policy is intended to benefit the full range of persons with disabilities, and their accommodation, under *The Human Rights Code (Manitoba)*.

Any policies of Qualico that do not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be modified or removed. Qualico will review the policy on an annual basis.

Actions and Implementations

1. Communication

Qualico will, upon request, and in consultation with the person making the request, provide or make arrangements to provide, accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities.

Accessible formats and communication supports shall be provided in a timely manner, taking into consideration the person's accessibility needs.

2. **Assistive devices**

People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our services or facilities. Qualico will ensure that its employees know how to use assistive devices available in providing its goods and services.

3. **Support persons**

Qualico recognizes that some individuals with disabilities rely on support persons for assistance while accessing our services at our premises or offsite at an event. A person with a disability and their support person will be allowed to enter our premises and attend our events. They will not be prevented from having access to each other while on the premises/at events.

Support persons accompanying or assisting individuals with disabilities may be required to abide by our conflict of interest and confidentiality policies.

Where Qualico incurs a charge for the attendance of a support person at a Qualico event (eg. a meal at an event) Qualico reserves the right to charge for the cost of the support person. This will be communicated in advance.

4. **Service Animals**

Qualico welcomes people with disabilities and their service animals to all parts of our premises that are open to the public. People with disabilities and their service animals will not be separated. On rare occasions where a service animal may not be permitted to enter an area of the premises consistent with other laws, employees will suggest appropriate alternatives and provide assistance.

5. **Barrier Free Access**

Qualico will maintain barrier-free access by:

- Keeping hallways, receptions areas and meeting rooms clear of clutter such as boxes.
- Keeping entrance ways cleared of snow and ice.
- Ensuring the placement of standing signage is not a tripping hazard.
- Having space for mobility devices in reception.
- Providing accessible space to view a live simulcast for those who are unable to access an event, class, etc. on the premises.

6. **Notice of Temporary Service Disruption**

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption of services or facilities (eg. main floor washroom is offline) for people with disabilities, Qualico will promptly post notices and when possible announce the disruption.

A clear posted notice or announcement will include the reason for the disruption, information about the reason for disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

7. Accessible Events

Qualico will make events accessible by:

- Announcing events in a manner that is accessible
- Holding events(s) in accessible meeting places when feasible
- Inviting requests for relevant disability accommodations in the event notice

8. Feedback process

Qualico welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Customer feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns.

Feedback can be made in writing, by telephone or emailed to:

Melissa Unrau, Regional HR Business Partner
Qualico
204-224-6150
munrau@qualico.com

Privacy will be respected and all feedback will be reviewed for possible action that can be taken to improve services. Where possible, complaints will be addressed immediately. However, some complaints may require more effort to address, and must be reviewed for implementation. We should be able to respond to feedback within 7-10 business days.

9. Training

All current employees will receive training on accessible customer service and on *The Human Rights Code (Manitoba)* as it relates to people with disabilities, by 01 November 2018.

Any new employee starting employment with Qualico after 01 November 2018 will receive training on accessible customer service including *The Human Rights Code (Manitoba)* within three months of their start date.