

Summary of Discussions
Customer Service Standard Development Committee
Thursday, March 20, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Second Floor Boardroom, Norquay Building, 401 York Avenue

Present: Jan Sanderson (Chairperson), Jim Derksen, Doug Momotiuk, Jim Baker, Judy Redmond, Scott Jocelyn, John Wyndels (Secretary), Yutta Fricke (DIO)

Absent: Lanny McInnis, Diane Dreidger, Diane Scribe Niiganii, Eileen Clarke

The agenda and minutes of the meeting February 20 were approved by all members without changes. The Secretary noted that this meeting is smaller than meetings will be in future. The two new members of the Council are currently waiting for the Order in Council to pass, which is anticipated prior to the next meeting.

The draft Terms of Reference was shared with all members seeking final approval before posting on the Disabilities Issues Office (DIO) website. All responses were in agreement. The Terms of Reference are now posted on the DIO site.

The AODA requires a review of each accessibility standard five years after it becomes law to determine whether the standard is working as intended and to allow for adjustments to be made as required.

The ASAC/CDS proposes 7 recommendations for changes that we may wish to consider:

1. Change language of definitions to harmonize concepts with other standards introduced in the meantime
2. Requirements that applied to organizations with 20 or more employees would now apply to organizations with 50 or more employees.
3. The reference to “Policies, practices and procedures” be changed to “policies” as per other standards introduced in the meantime,
4. Broaden the definition of service animals to make this broader
5. “Support person” is explained as someone protecting individuals on a premise in the original standard. In the proposed change, that there are limited circumstances in which a business could require that a PWD be accompanied by a support person.
6. Training of staff must be more robust.
7. Availability of formats of documents

Members were asked to review the document in detail. A fuller discussion on these recommendations will take place at the next meeting once everyone has had a chance

to reflect on the suggested revisions. Public consultations on the proposed revisions are being held. No date has been determined for the Government of Ontario to approve the proposed revisions or any other recommendations that may be put forward for consideration during the consultation process.

The Secretary also noted that the AODA Alliance, the equivalent of Barrier Free Manitoba, submitted a 35 page submission on the proposed revisions. It is comprehensive and critical of the proposed revisions, as well as the standard itself. It was agreed to be forwarded to Committee prior to the next meeting

The Secretary reported that at the last meeting there was agreement to move forward using the model from Ontario as the basis for developing a standard here in Manitoba. Although using the standard from Ontario, the Committee must take note of the significant differences between the two provinces, including its size and the size of the businesses there. It was suggested the CSC start by assuming Ontario's model as a base, and discuss each element as we move along, including consideration to the resources available in Manitoba versus in Ontario. It was suggested the next meeting be a half-day workshop to thoroughly review the Ontario Customer Service Standard. The aim will be to review all areas of Ontario's customer service standards and develop a core or skeleton of a discussion paper.

Further discussion took place regarding training that will take place through the CSC. While the standard says organizations must train its staff, it does not outline what that training should include. The Ontario Disability Directorate has produced many training materials that it is willing to share. The Directorate makes it very clear it does not endorse specific training programs of the other NGOs and agencies that are now offering training. This may be an area where further recommendations to the Ontario standard could be considered.

The next meeting of the Council will be Thursday, April 10. The Executive will have a conference call on Monday, April 7 to determine agenda and priorities for the next Committee meeting.