



## **Accessibility Policy**

The following policy and procedures have been established by Row Ontario to govern the provision of its services in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and Regulation 429/07, "Accessibility Standards for Customer Service."

### **Scope**

The policy and procedures apply to Row Ontario and the programs and services directly provided by the Association, as well as hosting agreements with organizations where our programs and services are provided. For example, this would include regatta sites and conference hotels. Member Clubs and Associations are encouraged to adopt a similar policy, so as to be in compliance with the Act.

### **Policy**

In fulfilling our mission, Row Ontario strives at all times to provide its goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our programs and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other members and participants.

*Board approved last: October 24, 2022  
To be reviewed by: October 2025*

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## Operational Procedures

Row Ontario is committed to excellence in serving all members and participants including people with disabilities and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

- 1) Communication – When communicating with a person with a disability, Row Ontario will communicate in a manner that takes into account the person’s disability.
- 2) Telephone Services – Row Ontario is committed to providing fully accessible telephone service to our participants and members. We will train our representatives to communicate with participants and representatives from member clubs over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly. We will offer to communicate with participants by email, if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.
- 3) Assistive devices – Row Ontario recognizes that some individuals with disabilities use assistive devices in order to access our services. We will permit these individuals to use their assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our services. Should an individual with a disability be unable to access our services through the use of their own personal assistive device, Row Ontario will determine if service is inaccessible, based upon the individual requirements, assess service delivery and potential service options to meet the needs of the individual. As our building is not accessible to all, we will make arrangements to meet at a barrier free facility with participants or representatives from member clubs as required.
- 4) Billing – Row Ontario is committed to providing accessible invoices to all of our participants and member clubs. For this reason, invoices will be provided in the following formats upon request: hard copy, large print or by email, or accessible format that works for them. Row Ontario will answer any questions participants may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone or email.
- 5) Service Animals – Row Ontario recognizes that some individuals with disabilities may require the use of guide dogs or other service animals in order to access services. Persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal will be permitted to enter the parts of our premises or our event locations that are common areas and to keep the animal with them, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises. If the animal is legally excluded from some parts of the premises, Row Ontario will provide alternative measures to enable the person to obtain, use or benefit from its services. If there are concerns regarding the service animal, documentation concerning the service animal may be required by Row Ontario.
- 6) Support Persons – Row Ontario further recognizes that some individuals with disabilities rely on support persons for assistance while accessing services. A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter Row Ontario’s premises or our event locations together with the support person and will not be prevented from having access to the support person while on our premises at no additional cost.
- 7) Employment Practices – Row Ontario will ensure all human resource procedures will meet the guidelines laid out within the policies. Any posting for employment will indicate an openness for potential candidates to be aware of our policy and support for all candidates to pursue the position.

### **Notice of Temporary Disruption**

Row Ontario will provide participants with notice 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 normally be posted on the premises, where appropriate in the circumstances.

### **Staff Training**

Row Ontario will provide training to applicable staff and volunteers about the provision of services to persons with disabilities and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies, practices and procedures. Applicable members of the team will be trained on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way services are provided to people with disabilities. Training will be updated if any changes are made to the legislation or changes in best practices. New team members will have training in this area as part of their orientation.

Training will include the following:

- a) The purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard.
- b) How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.
- c) How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person.
- d) What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Row Ontario services.
- e) Row Ontario's policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard.

### **Feedback Process**

The goal of Row Ontario with regard to accessibility is to meet and surpass participant and member clubs' expectations while serving persons with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback, including complaints, regarding the way Row Ontario provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made by email, verbally, or in writing. All feedback will be made to:

Row Ontario  
129 Hagar St. Unit 18A  
Welland, Ontario, L3B 5V9  
By Phone: 289-778-0750 | By Email: [info@rowontario.ca](mailto:info@rowontario.ca)

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

Row Ontario is 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 Row Ontario policy that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

### **Questions about this Policy**

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to participants 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 Chief Executive Officer of Row Ontario.

**Copies of this Policy**

Row Ontario recognizes that persons with disabilities use methods other than the standard print to access information. If Row Ontario is required to give a copy of this policy to a person with a disability, we will provide the policy, or the information contained in the policy, in a format that takes account the person's disability. Alternatively, Row Ontario and the person with a disability may agree on an alternate format for the document or information.

*Last reviewed: October 24, 2022*