

## Accessibility Policy

### Statement of Commitment

Alliance Roofing is committed to excellence in customer service. As such, our goal is to provide a barrier-free environment for all stakeholders, including our clients/customers, employees, job applicants, suppliers, contractors, the public and any visitors who may enter our premises, access our information, or use our services. We are dedicated to continuous improvement, and will evolve our practices in this regard. We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that we offer a safe and welcoming environment that is respectful of each person's dignity and independence through providing equality in service and access.

### Special Accommodations

Special accommodations such as Braille and large print are available upon request. Any Feedback, or questions regarding Alliance Roofing's Accessibility Policy and Multi-Year Accessibility Plan are to be directed to Gabby Daymond (Human Resources):

Via telephone	226-808-8749 or 519-763-2309
In writing	Please mail to: 25 Cope Court, Guelph, ON, N1K0A4
By email	<a href="mailto:gabby@allianceroofting.ca">gabby@allianceroofting.ca</a>
In-person	Our address is 25 Cope Court, Guelph, ON, N1K0A4

### Scope

This policy will pertain to all employees, temporary employees, volunteers, contractors, maintenance and service personnel.

### Definitions

#### **AODA;**

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005)

#### **Assistive Device;**

An auxiliary aid such as technical, communication and/or cognition aids used for reading, listening or speaking. Personal mobility and medial aids such as canes, crutches, wheelchair and hearing aids. These aids are used to increase, maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities.

#### **Barrier;**

As defined by AODA; 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 or architectural barrier, information or communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy procedure or a 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, including 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;

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- a learning disability, or 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 Workplace Safety and Insurance Act.

## ***Service Animal;***

As defined by AODA; 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 a physician or health care provider confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

## ***Support Persons;***

As defined by AODA; any person, whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member or friend who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to good and services.

## **Standard**

Alliance Roofing is committed to **treating all stakeholders with respect and dignity**. We will ensure that all reasonable efforts are made to provide accessible customer service to people with various kinds of disabilities and respect the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity. By understanding the various needs and requirements we can best serve all our customers and community.

Alliance Roofing will ensure that the policies and procedures are consistent with the following principles, as defined by the *Customer Service Standard, AODA*:

All goods and services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity of people with disabilities.

- **Dignity:** goods and services are provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to maintain self-respect and the respect of other people.
- **Independence:** when a person with a disability is allowed to do things on their own, without unnecessary help or interference from others.
- **Integration & Equal Opportunity:** goods and services are provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to benefit from the same goods and service, 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 and services. They should not have to make significantly more effort to access or obtain goods and services. They should also not have to accept inconvenience or lesser quality. Sometimes this may mean that the Alliance Roofing will have to treat individuals slightly differently so that they can benefit fully from the goods and service we provide.

When undertaking renovations, setting up new policies and procedures, and offering new goods and services, design choices will be considered that do not create barriers for persons with disabilities. Where barriers exist, whether physical, attitudinal or systemic, Alliance Roofing will actively identify and remove barriers whenever reasonably possible to do so, without sustaining undue hardship. When immediate resolution is not possible, interim or next-best measures will be implemented until a more ideal solution can be attained or phased-in.

## **Procedures**

It is important to understand the following acceptable procedures regarding persons with a disability:

- Casually and naturally ask if you can be of assistance if you observe that they require assistance. Never act as if you have not noticed them, they are not invisible, but merely have a disability that might be of the sort that needs a helping hand. Be helpful, ask if you can help, and do not insist if they tell you they do not need help. However, if they accept, help as you would anyone else, and follow their directions. Be friendly, be considerate and be supportive.
- Move out of the way when you see someone attempting to navigate a wheelchair. Move your feet out of the path of someone who is using a cane or a walker. If you notice that they might not be strong and steady on their feet, be prepared to lend an arm to steady them.
- Be patient if the person in front of you is slowly walking down the stairs, while holding on tightly to the handrail. Do not mutter under your breath showing impatience.

## **Assistive Devices**

Assistive devices are devices that are used to assist persons with disabilities in carrying out activities or in accessing the services of persons or organizations. We will ensure where applicable that assistive devices are welcomed and accommodated, and our employees are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers or other stakeholders with disabilities while accessing our goods, services and accommodations:

- Wheelchairs
- Crutches
- Canes
- Walkers
- Oxygen Tanks
- Service Animals
- Support Person(s)
- Motorized Mobility Chairs

It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that his or her assistive device is operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

## **Access & Facilities - Administration Building**

Our building at 25 Cope Court has the front door entrance of the main lobby as the main entrance for any disabled person(s) entering the premises for customer service. Our staff will guide and direct any persons needing any help. Our staff will also make sure the designated disability parking spots are only to be used by persons with a disability, otherwise the parking spot will remain vacant.

## **Communication**

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their particular disability. Two-way communications is a process of providing, sending, receiving and understanding information. To communicate in an effective way, we must consider how the disability affects the way the person expresses, receives or processes communications. It may be necessary to ask the person directly, what is the best way to communicate with them? Every situation is different and would depend on the individual's needs.

## ***Hearing Impaired / Mute***

Individuals communicate visually and physically rather than audibly. There are varying degrees of deafness: hard of hearing, "profoundly" deaf, and completely deaf. You can often recognize the hard of hearing by their hearing aids, although newer aids are becoming smaller and harder to detect. Deaf or profoundly deaf people may wear no hearing aid at all. Some will be able to lip read and understand you nearly perfectly, however, many may communicate with sign language rather than with words. This visual way of communicating can be intimidating and seem strange at first, but these guidelines will help:

1. Get the person's attention before attempting to talk or communicate. If needed, you can use a small wave or light touch to get the person's attention. It is not considered rude in deaf communities to lightly touch people you do not know to get their attention. The shoulder is a good place to touch someone you don't know well. Do not poke or shove.
2. Stay in their field of vision, and try to keep your eyes at the same level if possible. You should be a little further away than normal speaking distance (3-6 feet, 1-2 meters). This helps to ensure they can see all of your gestures. If you're indoors, make sure there's enough light for them to see you clearly.
3. Speak your greeting in a normal voice and tone, whispering or shouting will distort your lip movements, making it difficult for a deaf person to follow your words. Many deaf people can lip read to a certain extent. Similarly, if you exaggerate your mouth movements you will be harder to understand than if you speak normally. Increasing the volume only helps if the person is hard of hearing and it has the negative effect of drawing attention from other people around you, making the person you are addressing self-conscious. If they do not seem to be able to lip read, you may need to communicate with a notepad and pen. Start by writing your name and greeting.
4. Establish the nature of their visit, once this is established it is easier for both of you to follow the conversation. Don't change the subject suddenly; even the best lip readers can understand approximately 35 percent of what you are saying and must guess the rest in the context of the topic. Pause often and ask if they understand you.
5. Make eye contact, most of us are unaware how much we communicate through our eyes and facial expressions. If you have sunglasses on, take them off. If you can add facial expressions to emphasize a point (smiling, rolling your eyes, raising your eyebrows) do so.
6. Use gestures and visual cues such as pointing to or hold up any items that you're talking about, and wait until they're looking at you again before you resume speaking. You can also mimic actions, like drinking, jumping or eating, to illustrate your words. Hold up fingers to indicate numbers, scribble in the air to show you're writing a letter, and so on.
7. Be polite. If there is an interruption that the deaf person may not notice, such as the phone ringing or a knock on the door, explain why you are stepping away. Don't express your irritation when there is a need to repeat yourself. Allow for differences of opinion, just as you would with a hearing friend. Just as there are good and bad hearing people, there are also good and bad deaf people. Treat them courteously, and you'll be on a decent footing.
8. As a last option we will use a pad of paper to communicate via writing.

## **Mentally Challenged**

The ability to communicate with people whose speech is limited by mental deficiency is actually a skill that can be developed over time with practice. Whether you deal with mentally challenged speakers often or rarely, these points will help you to communicate more effectively and smoothly:

1. Maintain a calm low volume speaking voice, speaking louder doesn't make you more understandable.
2. When determining "age-appropriateness" of your words, remember that you must know the "mental age" of your listener, not his or her "calendar age". Remember, they are just mentally challenged, not a person with a limited vocabulary such as a five-year-old.
3. Do not cover or hide your mouth because listeners will want to watch you as you pronounce your words. In many cases this helps them figure out what you are saying.
4. Do not mimic how the mentally challenged speaker pronounces words, in a misguided presumption that he or she will "understand" if you speak like he or she does. This does not make it easier to understand you; it will only confuse your listener and may give the wrong impression about your sensitivity to his or her handicap.
5. Avoid running words together; for example, don't say "Do-ya wanna eat-a pizza?" One of the biggest challenges for listeners is knowing, where one word ends and the next one begins. Give them a small pause between words if they seem to be struggling.
6. When possible, opt for simple words instead of ones that are complex. The more basic a word is, the better the chance is that it will be understood. "Big" is a better choice than "enormous" and "Make" is a better choice than "manufacture."
7. Avoid speech complexity which is beyond the mentally challenged listener's comprehension level. Use simple subject-verb-object statements with the significantly challenged. More mildly challenged people may be able to handle more complex forms, such as joined independent clauses.
8. Look them in the eye, as it lets them know that you care about what you are saying. Although they may rarely make eye contact with you, let your body language show that you are interested in what they are talking about.

Consider the needs of people with disabilities during the planning stages of services and communication development. Consider using plain language to make a document easier to read for people with certain learning disabilities. Offering information in alternate formats when requested to do so:

- Hand-write or type information back and forth
- Braille (when possible)
- Printed hand-outs of commonly used information
- Utilizing large print
- Email as an alternate channel to provide accessible communication

## **Service Animals**

Alliance Roofing welcomes customers, clients and visitor with disabilities who are accompanied by a trained, accredited service animal. A service animal may accompany a customer, client or visitor to all parts of our premises that are open to the public, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law.

Service animals may be used for vision loss, physical disability, hearing loss, autism or even epilepsy.

We will ensure that all employees dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

To consider a service animal under this standard, it must either be readily apparent that the animal is being used because of a person's disability or the person with a disability may be asked to provide a letter from a physician or health care provider confirming that it is required due to their disability. Service animals, including service animals in training must be in the company of their disabled person or care giver at all times. No unaccompanied animals are allowed on the premises.

If the service animal is causing a disturbance for other customers, clients or visitors, the person and accompanying service animal may be required to leave the area or premises. The owner is also responsible to "stoop & scoop" and or remedy unreasonable mess made by the animal.

### **Support Persons**

Alliance Roofing is committed to welcoming people with a disability who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability accompanied by a support person is allowed to have that person accompany them on the parts of our premises that are open to the public. 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 property.

### **Temporary Disruption of Services**

In the event of a planned service disruption to facilities, services or systems that are relied upon by persons with disabilities a notice of disruption will be provided in advance of the disruption. This notice will provide the following information:

- Reason for the disruption
- The anticipated duration of the disruption
- Alternate service, facilities or systems available

The notice will be posted in a conspicuous place on the premises, and may be manually communicated to all relevant parties as required. Disruption notices may be posted on the company website or on the phone system utilizing automated attendant recordings.

In the event of an unexpected disruption, advance notice will not be possible. In such cases we will provide notice as soon as possible. We will utilize the best method of communication based on the nature of the disruption.

### **Receiving & Responding to Feedback**

Alliance Roofing will invite all customers, clients and visitors to provide feedback on our customer service as feedback is important to us. Employees will offer the availability of providing customer feedback through the website, by email, phone or in-person. If customers wish to be contacted with a response to comments contact information should be provided. All feedback will be addressed on a quarterly basis at our Health and Safety meetings and addressed by committee and forwarded to management if needed. Customer service is our business.

Replying to feedback received is not mandatory, however depending upon the situation or nature of the information provided, it may be appropriate to address the feedback provider. When replying or responding to feedback the following actions will be taken:

- Feedback is directed to the appropriate person for action
- Feedback is assessed for appropriate action
- Response should be addressed and answered in a timely fashion

This Feedback will provide us a road map for continuous improvement.

## **Roles & Responsibilities**

### **Senior Management & HR**

- Review the Accessibility Standard annually, to ensure full conformity and compliance with legislative changes
- Review and delegate feedback responses
- Communicate policy & procedures to all employees
- Ensure worker & employee compliance with the standard
- Ensure appropriate training & orientation as required
- Implement legislative changes
- Provide excellent customer service

### **All Other Staff**

- Read and adhere to policy & procedures
- Participate in customer, client, and visitor feedback as required
- Provide feedback as situations arise
- Provide excellent customer service

## **Communication**

This policy and any updates will be communicated to all employees via any of the following:

- Health & Safety Meeting — Safety Talks
- Payroll Insert
- Health & Safety Orientation
- Health & Safety Bulletin Board Posting
- General Training Sessions

## **Review & Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed annually for:

- Suitability / applicability to the business
- New legislation
- Best practices

Review and evaluation is a focal point of our multi-year plan.

**Policy updated: 15 August 2016**

**Distributed to: All Employees**

**Document to be posted: Yes**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_



**Date: 15 August 2016**

**Glenn Schwantz, President**



