

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE CIRCULAR

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To: All licensed child care facilities

Subject: Accessible Customer Service Standard and Updates to Service Animals

Effective Date: July 8, 2026

Type:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All Facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Action Required
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	<input type="checkbox"/> Licensing	<input type="checkbox"/> Nursery Schools	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial	<input type="checkbox"/> Family/Group Homes	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Subsidy		

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This circular reminds all licensed early learning and child care facilities with employees of their obligations under the Accessible Customer Service Standard Regulation of The Accessibility for Manitobans Act. It also provides information on recent updates regarding service animals to support facilities to comply with the legislation and provide accessible customer service.

Background

Since November 2018, [The Accessible Customer Service Standard Regulation](#) under [The Accessibility for Manitobans Act](#) has required private and non-profit organizations in Manitoba, including early learning and child care facilities with at least one employee, to have policies and procedures in place to support barrier-free customer service. This includes welcoming people with service animals and allowing service animals on our premises.

In the context of early learning and child care, accessible customer service means that staff, volunteers and board members at licensed child care facilities are required to provide barrier free services to persons, including children, guardians and family members. Often, this can be done at no cost.

Requirements for Licensed Child Care Facilities

Licensed child care centres (including nursery schools) and family/group homes with employees or who hire casual staff are expected to comply with the Accessible Customer Service Standard Regulation. Note: home-based providers who do not have any employees or hire casual staff are exempt from this regulated standard.

Complying with the Accessible Customer Service Standard Regulation, includes mandatory training on accessible customer service, and applies to all child care facility staff, board members and volunteers.

Updates to Service Animals

To better reflect current practices on welcoming children, visitors and family members with service animals, the following documents published by the Manitoba Human Rights Commission and the Manitoba Accessibility Office, are now updated:

- [Service Animals: What is a service animal](#)
- [Fact Sheet: Service Animals and The Human Rights Code](#)
- [Discrimination against persons with disabilities who use service animals: Your rights, Your responsibilities](#)

Additional display resources:

- [Service Animals Decal \(Poster\) – Black and White; Colour](#)
- Service Animal Small Window Decal- Contact Manitoba [Accessibility Office](#) to order

Some important considerations highlighted in the above documents:

- Regardless of the type of disability, if the animal has been trained to assist a person with a disability related need, it is considered a service animal.
- There is no standardized documentation, training program or certification of service animals in Manitoba. Any animal that has been trained, including self trained, to provide disability related tasks for a person with a disability may be considered a service animal under The Accessibility for Manitobans Act and the Human Rights Code.

- If the need for a service animal is not obvious, employers and child care facilities can request that the individual or guardians provide a note from a regulated medical practitioner in Manitoba to confirm that the person requires the assistance of a service animal due to a disability-related need. It is not, however, appropriate to require medical information that includes the individual's diagnosis, nor is it appropriate to request that the animal demonstrate the task for which it is trained.
- Service animals are not to be interacted with unless otherwise indicated by the handler. Service animals must always be under the control of their handler. Part of the training of service animals supports them to maintain control of unwanted behaviours. An organization may ask the handler to remove the animal from the premises if the animal is misbehaving, not under the control of its handler or demonstrating aggressive behaviour.

[The Accessibility Compliance Secretariat](#) is responsible for monitoring compliance. Child care facilities may be selected for review, or they can be inspected with or without notice. If results from a review or an inspection show that the facility is not in compliance with the regulated standard, a plan will be developed to help the facility reach compliance through training, guidance and sharing of tools and resources.

If you have any questions related to compliance with the requirements of The Accessibility for Manitobans Act and its regulations, contact the Accessibility Compliance Secretariat at 431-276-0904 or accessibilitycompliance@gov.mb.ca.

To learn more about the The Accessibility for Manitobans Act and its regulations, including the Customer Service Standard Regulation, visit the [Manitoba Accessibility Office](#) website or contact 204-945-7613 or mao@gov.mb.ca.

For additional operational guidance on allowable animals, including service animals in your child care facility, view [Routine Practices: Guide to Creating a Healthy Environment and Preventing Infections within Child Care Facilities and Schools](#)

Thank you for your continued efforts to remove barriers and achieve accessible customer service for your child care facility.