



Gowlings' Compliance Services for the New Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

Norm Keith, Gowlings' Occupational Health and Safety's (OHS) National Practice Group leader is pleased to announce Gowlings' multi-disciplinary consulting service for compliance with the new Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.

WHAT ARE THE ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE?

Ontario Regulation 429/07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (ASCS), made under the *Accessibility for Ontarians Disabilities Act*, S.O. 2005, Chapter 11 (the *AODA*), establishes accessibility standards for customer service for persons with disabilities in Ontario.

The ASCS applies to all organizations in Ontario with one or more employees. All private sector organizations are required to comply with the ASCS by January 1, 2012. Public sector organizations have been required to comply with the ASCS since January 1, 2010.

The ASCS requires every employer in Ontario to establish policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of its goods or services to persons with disabilities. Employers must also provide their employees with training with respect to the provision of its goods or services to persons with disabilities.

GOWLINGS THREE-STEP CONSULTING SERVICE CAN HELP YOUR ORGANIZATION COMPLY WITH THE ASCS

Step 1: ASCS Compliance Assessment

Gowlings will conduct an ASCS Compliance Assessment for your organization in order to identify the need for policies, practices and procedures required to comply with the ASCS.

The ASCS Compliance Assessment includes a review of your organization's customer service policies, procedures and practices, worker training records and past incident/complaint reports. We will also attend at your workplace and conduct a physical inspection. The physical inspection will identify potential barriers to customer service in the workplace and the types of goods or services offered by the organization. Upon completion of the ASCS Compliance Assessment, we will be in a position to move to Step 2 and develop your organization's customized policies, practices and procedures as required by the ASCS.

Step 2: Development of Policies, Practices and Procedures

Gowlings will continue to work with your organization to develop your customized policies, practices and procedures based on the results of our ASCS Compliance Assessment. These documents include but are not necessarily limited to:

- Methods of communicating with persons with a disability;
- Use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from an organizations goods or services;
- Use of guide dogs, service animals and support persons while on an organization's premises;

- Steps to be taken in connection with the notification of a temporary disrupted service;
- Process for receiving and responding to feedback about the manner in which an organization provides goods or services to persons with disabilities; and
- Training policies including a summary of the contents of the training and details of when the training is to be provided.

Step 3: Employee Training

The final step of Gowlings' Compliance Service is to develop and deliver a customized training program for your employees. Training topics include:

- A review of the purposes and legal duties under the AODA and the ASCS;
- An overview of the contents of your new policies, procedures and practices;
- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability;
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person;
- How to use equipment and devices available on the organization's premises to assist with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability; and
- What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the organization's goods or services.

NO-OBLIGATION QUOTE

A Gowlings OHS Consultant is available to discuss your organization's ASCS needs and can provide a written no-obligation quote for the above consulting service.

For more information on Gowlings' ASCS Legal Compliance Services and prices please contact:

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