

Date created: May 2017

Review:

Diamond Taxi Accessibility Plan

Message from the Management

We strive to meet the special needs of both customers and staff in our taxi service. We take pride in having been an equal opportunity employer for over 30 years. As such, we have in place Policies and Procedures for the accommodation of both customers and workers in compliance with the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario.

The Management is committed to equal opportunities for disabled people in recruitment and employment and aims to create an environment which enables them to work effectively as part of the workplace. This plan includes Accessibility policies training as well as ongoing review for needs and changes. It also includes a plan for accessible customer service. We will continue to update these on an ongoing basis.

Introduction

Diamond Taxi strives to meet the needs of its employees and customers with disabilities and is working hard to remove and prevent barriers to accessibility.

Our business is committed to fulfilling our requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. This accessibility plan outlines the steps Diamond Taxi is taking to meet those requirements and to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

Our plan shows how Diamond Taxi will play its role in making Ontario an accessible province for all Ontarians.

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Section One: Past Achievements to Remove and Prevent Barriers

This document includes a summary of the accessibility initiatives that Diamond Taxi has completed.

Customer Service Standard.

We were the first taxi company in the city to have a wheel chair accessible taxi, in order to respond to the demand for this service. Since that time in 1985, we have increased the number of accessible vehicles to our current number of 11, in order to remain fully accessible.

We continue to update our vehicles to make service possible for the larger motorized wheel chairs. In addition, we have followed up on some community complaints regarding the accessible van service, by increasing our numbers to our current number.

There is a continuing demand for both regular mini vans, and also for sedans, in order to be accessible as there are people who can not get in the wc vans due to hip, knee and other health issues. This does create some logistics issues, with matching the required type of vehicle in the correct location in a timely manner. Therefore, scheduling the correct types of vehicles each day is a continuing priority, with a focus on preventing barriers that customers may be facing.

We have implemented an app that allows customer easier access to booking taxis, if they have barriers in booking by regular phone lines. This is done by Gata Lab app, and we have had good success with it since its implementation in 2014.

Information and Communications

In addition to the Gata app for booking cabs, we have installed mobile data terminals in all the taxis in 2003. These allow for written information to be transmitted, which is more private method of information transfer. It also allows for easy access of the information for the driver, who may have issues with regular radio use. The mdt allows for large print view for those who are not able to see the small print.

We have had a web site since 2009, but its use continues to be mostly for advertising through yellow pages. It has been updated for the AODA compliance requirements in March 2017. We will continue to monitor its value to the business, and will update it according to requirements on an ongoing basis.

The policies in place for customer feedback are as follows:

- ⑩ phone.
- ⑩ Email
- ⑩ Gata hub app
- ⑩ in person in office.

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Employment

The company believes in the value of a diverse workforce and this includes the representation of staff with disabilities. It, therefore, aims to create an accessible physical environment and an inclusive culture. More specifically, it aims to ensure that:

- Applications for employment are assessed on the basis of objective and relevant criteria that do not discriminate against disabled people
- Reasonable adjustments are offered to candidates with disabilities, where appropriate, during the selection process
- The views of staff with disabilities are taken into account and their concerns for confidentiality are respected
- Reasonable adjustments are offered to staff with disabilities to enable them to undertake their work effectively
- Existing members of staff who become disabled during their employment are enabled to continue in employment where this is practicable and in line with their wishes

Information and communications:

In 2016, we spent countless weeks in preparing the training materials in an audio visual format, in order to make it easier for all new and existing staff. This is almost complete, but will be reviewed as required. The AODA updates and policies will need to be added to the av format of training, although they already form a part of the written training package. All staff have been updated on the new policies and will continue to be through postings on the staff board.

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Section Two: Strategies and Actions

The Diamond Taxi is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities. This means that we will provide taxi services to people with disabilities with the same high quality and timeliness as others.

Customer Service

The following is the strategies for customer service in order to continue our goal of accessibility.

Maintenance/facilities:

Public and working areas to be maintained clutter free and accessible. This is done on a regular basis by management and staff, and is reviewed and recorded monthly during the workplace health and safety assessment. This is reported to the JHSC committee during its quarterly meetings.

The facilities are accessible for people with disabilities as there is no stairs. The short distances within the office make it easily accessible, and there have been no identified barriers. Any future identified barriers are to be reviewed for resolution as appropriate.

Employment

Hiring:

Diamond Taxi is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. In order to achieve this, we will do as follows:

1. As possible, reasonable accommodations are made with all staff with all forms of disabilities to accommodate all forms of disabilities. This includes during the hiring and interview process.
2. Notification of successful applicant will be made by either email or phone.

Training

Diamond Taxi is committed to providing training in the requirements of Ontario's accessibility laws and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it applies to people with disabilities. This will be done as follows:

- The staff information boards have been labelled in order to make it easier to find the appropriate information.
- All new policies and information is placed on a clip board in the staff room in order to make it available for all staff at start of shift.

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- All the training has been converted into audio visual training which is available for all staff in the staff room for review at their convenience, and for review as required. This makes the training available to all staff with varying learning needs.
- The training manual has been updated to include the AODA and accessibility policies and procedures. The AV version remains to be completed. The deadline for this will be by the end of 2017. It will be done by Sharran Sekhon.

Working:

Diamond Taxi is committed to providing working conditions as per the requirements of Ontario's accessibility laws and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it applies to people with disabilities. This will be done as follows:

1. While driving taxi, adjustments can be made as per each individual situation, such as driving a vehicle best suited for them, limiting customers whose needs may not be able to be met by the driver due to disability, hours of work flexibilities, accommodating special equipment such as back supports etc.
2. In office, use of chairs as best to accommodate abilities; use of headphones and other technical and other supportive items as required will be made available as possible; other flexibilities as possible within the work performed and the work environment will be made available.
3. Any other special needs can and will be made available as per individual case.
4. We have an early return to work program with policies to accommodate workers to return to work with necessary accommodation due to disabilities.
5. In order to accommodate the needs of the workers requiring workplace emergency response, we will utilize a thorough assessment process in an effort to make all workers safe in the workplace in case of a workplace emergency.
6. Any issues identified in this area will be reviewed at least yearly at the JHSC meetings, with recommendations to be made by any staff. Requests for any input will be posted on the bulletin board so that all staff are able to participate in this process. Any responses to the identified issues will be posted on the staff board within 3 months of identification, earlier if urgency exists.

Information and Communications

Diamond Taxi is committed to making our information and communications accessible to its staff with disabilities. The following outlines the process in place:

The staff information boards have been labelled in order to make it easier to find the appropriate information.

All new policies and information is placed on a clip board in the staff room in order to make it available for all staff at start of shift.

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All the training has been converted into audio visual training which is available for all staff in the staff room for review at their convenience, and for review as required. This makes the training available to all staff with varying learning needs. This will be continued and updated as per need. A computer with headphones has been set up for private listening by any staff as per need.