

Accessibility Standards for Ontarians with Disabilities (AODA) – Customer Service Policy

Accessibility Customer Service Policy

This Customer Service Policy applies to GNC Canada Home Office and GNC stores in Ontario and their employees. This Policy also applies to anyone dealing with the public or other third parties (vendor representatives).

GNC Canada is committed to providing accessible and equitable customer service to each and every one of our diverse and valued customers. This Policy has been prepared to ensure a consistent customer experience is provided at our GNC Canada Home Office as well as in our stores located in Ontario, in accordance with the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O. Reg 429/07 of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (“AODA”). Certain terms used within this Policy are defined within **Schedule A attached**

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

GNC Canada takes pride in welcoming customers with disabilities to our stores. We respect the dignity, independence and equality of our customers and we are committed to ensuring that our shopping experience is integrated and accessible to all people with disabilities.

Communication

Our communications, from initial greeting through the sales process, will demonstrate our commitment to serve customers with disabilities. To do this, all required employees to whom this policy applies will receive training in how to communicate with persons with disabilities. Requests for alternative methods of communication should be fulfilled as promptly as possible. For example, using a note pad to write down information or having an employee read information out loud to a customer. If a solution or accommodation is not readily available, the customer’s request should be recorded and accommodated.

Assistive Devices

Our customers are welcome to use their own personal assistive devices to access our merchandise and services. To further ensure the accessibility of our goods and services, employees are available to help navigate within the stores.

Support Persons And Service Animals

Support persons and guide dogs or other service animals are also welcome to accompany our disabled customers while shopping in our stores or attending our home office. Wherever service animals are prohibited by law, we will provide personal assistance.

Notice of Temporary Interruption of Services or Specific Facilities

If we are temporarily unable to offer services or specific facilities used by customers with disabilities, we will make every reasonable effort possible to provide notice of this interruption to these facilities or services. Notices of disruption will be posted conspicuously in the affected location(s) as soon as is feasible and will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative options, if available. We may not be able to give advance notice in case of an emergency disruption.

Training

Our employees receive ongoing documented training concerning customers with disabilities through a computer based learning (CBL) module. For newly hired employees, the training should be completed within three (3) months of being hired. Training records will be kept in employee files. Training will be updated in respect to any changes to the policies, practices or procedures relating to the AODA.

Customer Feedback

We actively encourage the participation of all customers in our feedback process. In compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service regulation, we have established a feedback process specifically for the accessibility of our customer service. Any concerns brought to our attention will be addressed in a timely, thorough and objective manner. In addition to sharing your comments in person, you may also contact us by phone at 1-800-496-4972 or via email at AODA-cs@gnc-hq.com. Personal information provided by customers in the feedback process will be handled in accordance with GNC’s privacy policies, available online at www.gnc.ca.

If you feel that these standards have not been maintained in your situation, please feel free to let us know by following the Customer Feedback process outlined above.

GNC Canada is committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. GNC Canada retains the right to amend or change this policy at any time; however, any such change will only be made after considering the impact on people with disabilities.

Schedule A Definitions

Assistive Device A device used by persons with a disability to facilitate access and/or independence in everyday tasks. Such devices include mobility equipment (i.e. wheelchairs and walkers) as well as portable communication devices, head wands, hearing aids and much more.

Communication Refers to the transference of information and can use a variety of formats including verbal, written and/or visual.

Disability The AODA and the Ontario Human Rights Code defines “disability” in the same way. “Disability” means:

- a** 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, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, 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,
- b** a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c** a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d** a mental disorder, or
- e** an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

Service Animal An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability,

- a** if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
- b** if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

Service animals help people with autism, developmental/intellectual disabilities, vision loss, hearing loss, physical disabilities and/or those who have epilepsy or other seizure disorders.

Support Person In relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services