**1. POLICY**

1.01 Yogurty’s takes the position that the customer service and information offered by our company will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.

1.02 The provision of customer service and information to persons with disabilities and others are integrated into our general customer service practices unless an alternative measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the information and customer service our company provides.

1.03 Yogurty’s will make reasonable efforts to provide customer service and information to persons with disabilities, taking into account their disability.

**2. DEFINITIONS**

2.01 Yogurty’s defines Disability as:

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;

* A condition of mental impairment or developmental disability;
* A learning disability, or a 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 Insurance Act.

2.02 Yogurty’s defines “barrier” as 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 barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

2.03 Yogurty’s defines practices of “dignity” as those that treat customers with a disability as valued and deserving of the same level of customer service as any other customer.

2.04 We define the principle of “independence” as providing customer service information and communication to persons with disabilities in a way that considers their needs.

2.05 “Integrated Services” are defined as those that allow customers and clients with disabilities to have access to customer service and communications in a way that considers their needs.

2.06 “Equal Opportunity” means person with disabilities should not have to accept lesser quality customer service than other customers, as much as is reasonably possible.

2.07 “Reasonable Efforts” means doing as much as is reasonably possible to take steps and make changes through a variety of means such as changing a procedure or considering the needs of persons with disabilities when creating customer service standards for accessibility.

2.08 “Guide Dog” is a highly-trained working dog that has been trained at one of the facilities listed in Ontario Regulation 58 under the Blind Persons’ Rights Act, to provide mobility, safety and increased independence for people who are blind.

2.09 “Service Animal” – as reflected in Ontario Regulation 429/07, 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 nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

2.10 “Service Dog” – as reflected in Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562 a dog other than a guide dog for the blind is a service dog if:

* it is readily apparent to an average person that the dog functions as a service dog for a person with a medical disability;
* or the person who requires the dog can provide on request a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires a service dog.

**2.11 “**Support Person” – as reflected in Ontario Regulation 429/07, a support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to goods and services.

 **3. PURPOSE**

3.01 Create customer service standards and procedures that support the inclusion of persons with disabilities as set out in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, *Ontario Human Rights Code, the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) 2001*, the *Accessibility for Ontarian with Disabilities Act (AODA) 2005* and the *Accessibility Standards for customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07.*

3.02 To provide customer service to persons with disabilities, as defined in the *Ontario Human rights code* (described in Section 3.01 above) in a respectful, helpful and accommodating manner.

3.03 This policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure compliance with accessibility standards on an ongoing basis.

**4. WORKPLACE ACCESSIBILITY ANALYSIS**

4.01 Yogurty’s will assess our workplace in two areas to determine gaps with regard to customer service accessibility standards:

a) Environmental assessment

b) Communication and Information assessment

4.02 Our organization will take actions to address areas for improved accessibility identified in these assessments.

**5. PROCEDURES**

5.01 Environmental Factors

(a) Yogurty’s adjusts facilities, where reasonably possible, to provide ease of customer service to customers with disabilities.

5.02 Communication and Information

(a) Yogurty’s will communicate with persons with disabilities in ways that take their disability into account when using, receiving and requesting customer service and information. Alternative methods of communication can include but are not limited to pen and paper, typing back and forth, adjusting speaking pace/volume, electronic communication systems, large print, telephone and email.

(b) Yogurty’s informs our customers of the various feedback opportunities and mechanisms available to them on our website as well as other means such as: store notices. Customers are informed of the time frame for a response and contact information for the person/department responsible for the response.

(c) All customer feedback with regard to accessibility will be responded to, reviewed and remedied as appropriate.

(d) In the event of a planned or unexpected temporary disruption in the services or facilities used by persons with disabilities (such as elevators, accessible washrooms etc.) notice will be made available to customers with disabilities via written notice.

(e) Notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, how long the disruption is expected to last and a description of alternative facilities or services available, if any.

(f) Yogurty’s has a Plan on how our company provides customer service and information to customers with disabilities.

5.03 Assistive Support - Devices

(a) Yogurty’s permits Assistive Devices on our premises. Staff will not operate or interfere with these devices without permission from the owner/user (i.e. move a person’s cane or wheelchair without permission), unless absolutely necessary for emergency or safety purposes.

(b) Where Assistive Devices exist on our premises we train staff on their use and availability and keep these devices repaired and updated.

(c) Managers are trained to identify alternative arrangements where animals are prohibited by law.

5.04 Assistive Support – Support Persons

(a) Yogurty’s permits Support Persons to accompany persons with disabilities.

(b) Yogurty’s makes every effort to deal directly with persons with disabilities without their support person, wherever possible, when in the interest of the persons with the disability and/or requested by them, and makes every effort to protect the confidentiality and privacy of the customers with a disability.

(c) Persons with a disability who are accompanied by a support person will not be prevented from having access to their support person while on our premises as much as is reasonably possible and in their best interest.

(d) In the instance where a person with a disability must be accompanied by a support person for the safety or health of the person with the disability or the health or safety of others, but no support person is available, a manager will determine whether there is an acceptable alternative or if the services must be rescheduled when appropriate arrangements can be made.

(e) When support persons are required for sign language interpretation, attendants, etc. Yogurty’s will not pay support persons directly for their time and reasonable travel expenses.

**5.05 Assistive Support - Guide Dogs, Service Animals and Service Dogs**

A customer with a disability that is accompanied by guide dog, service animal or service dog will be **allowed access to Yogurty’s premises** that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law. “No pet” policies do not apply to guide dogs, service animals and/or service dogs.

* 1. Yogurty’s permits Service Animals on our premises and to accompany an person with a disability in any area where the public are permitted and/or served including washrooms, except where food is being prepared or the animal could be at risk. Our staff will not interact with service animals without the permission of the owner/handler, unless required to do so for safety or emergency purposes.
	2. Managers are trained to find a workable compromise where there is a conflict of rights [i.e., staff person is allergic to animal; staff person has phobia to the animal.]
	3. Food Service Areas:

A customer with a disability that is accompanied by guide dog or service dog will be allowed access to food service areas that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law.

Other types of service animals are not permitted into food service areas due to the Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562 Section 60.

* 1. Exclusion Guidelines:

If a guide dog, service animal or service dog is excluded by law (see applicable laws below) Yogurty’s will offer alternative methods to enable the person with a disability to access services, when possible (for example, securing the animal in a safe location and offering the guidance of an employee).

* 1. Applicable Laws:

The Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562 Section 60, normally does not allow animals in places where food is manufactured, prepared, processed, handled, served, displayed, stored, sold or offered for sale.  It does allow guide dogs and service dogs to go into places where food is served, sold or offered for sale.  However, other types of service animals are not included in this exception.

Dog Owners\' Liability Act, Ontario: If there is a conflict between a provision of this Act or of a regulation under this or any other Act relating to banned breeds (such as pitbulls) and a provision of a by-law passed by a municipality relating to these breeds, the provision that is more restrictive in relation to controls or bans on these breeds prevails.

* 1. Recognizing a Guide Dog, Service Dog and/or Service Animal:

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used by the customer for reasons relating to his or her disability, Yogurty’s may request verification from the customer.
Verification may include:

* a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons related to the disability;
* a valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada; or,
* a certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school.
	1. Care and Control of the Animal:

The customer that is accompanied by a guide dog, service dog and/or service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all time.

* 1. Allergies:

If a health and safety concern presents itself for example in the form of a severe allergy to the animal, Yogurty’s will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals.

**6. TRAINING**

6.01 Yogurty’s provides training regarding Customer Service Standards for Persons with Disabilities to our employees and other third parties operating on our behalf. Training is provided through a Resource Manual and workbook or E-Learning web based format and is accessible to staff 24/7 from any location or computer.

6.02 Training content includes but is not limited to:

* An overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) 2005 and the requirements of the Customer Service Standards
* Plan and procedures related to the customer service standards
* How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
* Ensuring confidentiality, as much as is possible, for customers with disabilities, when accompanied by a support person
* Understanding how to interact with customers with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or support person
* How to use any equipment or devices on our premises that may help provide service to persons with disabilities
* What to do if a person with a disability has difficulty accessing our customer service or information

**7. FEEDBACK**

7.01 Yogurty’s is committed to fostering relationships with all of our customers and strives to meet their expectations. Yogurty’s will continue to ensure that its process for receiving and responding to feedback is accessible to persons with disabilities by providing, or arranging for the provision of, accessible formats and communications supports as practicable, upon request.

7.02 Upon request, Yogurty’s will provide or arrange for accommodated forms and communication supports for persons with disabilities that take into account the persons accessibility needs, unless it is not technically feasible to do so and subject to any privacy or confidentiality considerations.

7.03 Yogurty’s will ensure that its Internet websites, including web content, conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA, except where it is impracticable to do so.